The World's Wit and Humor

The World's Wit and Humor

An Encyclopedia of the Classic Wit and Humor of all Ages and Nations

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Homer to Lucian

Plautus to Juvenal

Eastern Specimens from Thirty Centuries

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Humor in Classic Literature

By William Hayes Ward

HUMOR is human, and therefore universal. People of every race laugh; they appreciate, in their own way, what is fantastic. Their idea of a joke may be very rude, but it exists. It may show itself in amusement at the contortions of the victim of savage cruelty, or it may delight in the grotesque exaggerations of Japanese outline, or in the delicate shading of an unexpected phrase in a bishop's sermon. But somehow, in every race, Bushman or Chinaman or Englishman, humor is always, everywhere, recognized and enjoyed.

The earliest drawings on Greek vases show the playfulness as well as the serious purpose of the artist-potter. The first and greatest of Greek poets adds strokes of wit to his stories of the Trojan war. When Ulysses returns from the siege of Ilium he stops at the island of Sicily, and he and his companions are caught by the one-eyed giant Polyphemus and imprisoned in his cave. Then comes the story of the crafty leader's escape, after some of his companions had been slain and eaten by the monster. It is a most amusing story, told with all Greek humor, how the giant was blinded with the burnt stick which gouged out his eye while in a drunken sleep; how the Greeks escaped through the entrance by clinging under the bodies of his sheep, while he felt of them one by one to see that not a Greek escaped.

Then comes the giant's howling call to his distant companions, and in answer to their question, who had blinded him, his telling them that "Outis" (Nobody) had done it, *Outis* (*Nobody*) being the name Ulysses had given the giant as his own. "If nobody has done it," replied his companions, "then it is the act of the gods," and they left him to endure his loss. Thus the Greeks escape to their ships and taunt the monster as they flee away, followed by his vain pursuit. Homer relieves the wisdom of Ulysses and the dignity of Agamemnon with the gibes of Thersites or the rude humor of the suitors of Penelope, the trick of whose embroidery is itself an amusing story.

The Greeks were the maddest, jolliest race of men that have ever inhabited our planet. As they loved games and play, they loved the joke. Plato says that when the Graces sought a temple that would not fall, they found the soul of the comedian Aristophanes. Just as the medieval architects put the most ridiculous and hideously laughable gargoyles on their most sacred cathedrals, so mirth and revelry and all pasquinade were wedded to the worships of the Greek gods. Bacchus was the god of wine and mirth, and was worshiped with the sport of bacchanals. It was in the Bacchanalia that Greek drama had its origin, first comic. There was the representation in carts and processions, in the Dionysiac festivals, of everything that could be conceived of as bizarre and ridiculous. The players clothed themselves in animal forms, so that the very name of *tragedy* comes from the *goat* or *satyr;* while the name of *comedy* comes from the *band* of roistering strollers. The players stained their faces with the dregs of wine, until Thespis invented horrible masks.

Gradually the tragedy became more serious, but it had

its origin in the farce. The perfected Greek drama still gave superior honor to the coarse humor in which it originated, for it required the trilogy, composed of a tragedy, a comedy, and a satire. Comedy consisted largely in abuse, ridicule, and parody even of the most sacred things. In three of his plays that have come down to us Aristophanes made sport of the Jingoes of his day. In others he ridiculed women's rights and social theories, which had as many advocates then as now. He did not hesitate to travesty and mimic the greatest teachers and poets of his day. Euripides was thus travestied in one of his comedies; and in the "Apology" Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates the statement that the populace had been prejudiced against him by the ribald jests of the comic poet.

But the extravagances of the comedies became so slanderous that laws were enacted to curb them, especially as political liberty began to be restrained. In the new comedy personal and political attacks were forbidden, under the rule of Philip; and Menander was the founder of a school which set up imaginary characters representing familiar vices; and from this new comedy Latin comedy had its origin. But yet the gods were not protected from abuse, so that the Church father Arnobius could charge his contemporaries with making laws to protect men against abuse, but not the gods. "With you," said he, "only the supreme gods are unhonored and despicable, vile; against whom, with you, any one who writes may utter shame, and may cast any abuse which his invention has imagined or devised."

It cannot be said that Latin literature shows much original humor, although Cicero was called "*Scurra Consularis*," the "Consular Jester." The lively humor which we meet frequently in Homer is lacking in the "Æneid" of Vergil.

It is hardly amusing when Ascanius finds the unexpected key to an oracle as they are "eating their tables." There is satire enough in Horace and his successors, but it is more bitter than witty. The "Odes" of Horace, incomparable as they are, yet are not fairly humorous; and the same is true of the "Eclogues" of Vergil. Pretty much all the humor of Latin literature is, like its philosophy, borrowed from the Greek. Thus Ennius and Plautus and Terence translated or copied the Greek models of Menander, retaining often even the names of the characters, just as Vergil in his "Eclogues" followed Theocritus.

But satire found a congenial home amid the extravagance and ostentation of Roman life. In art it showed itself in the abundant caricatures which we find in the decorations of Pompeii, as where we see Æneas pictured, leading his son and carrying his father on his shoulders; but the three are put into ridiculous attitudes, with the heads of dogs, evidently a travesty on some famous painting. Ennius was the father of Roman satire, followed by Terence, and in succession we have the satires of Horace, Lucretius, Juvenal, and Persius. Suetonius tells us that Caligula ordered a poet to be burned in the middle of the amphitheater for a scurrilous verse; but in the time of Nero there was a full return to the early unchecked license, as is seen in the writings of Petronius and Apuleius.

Plato was right when he declared the *agelastoi* (the *laughless*) to be the least respectable of mortals. The sense of humor is the saving element which adds common sense to blank seriousness; and no people ever had so much humor, genius, and common sense as the Greeks.

Greek, Roman, and Oriental Wit and Humor

Greek Wit and Humor

Homer

The Beating of Thersites

Ulysses' ruling thus restrained
The host from flight; and then again the Council was maintained
With such a concourse that the shore rang with the tumult made;
As when the far-resounding sea doth in its rage invade
His sandy confines, whose sides groan with his involved wave,
And make his own breast echo sighs. All sate, and audience gave.
Thersites only would speak all. A most disordered store
Of words he foolishly poured out, of which his mind held more
Than it could manage; anything with which he could procure
Laughter, he never could contain. He should have yet been sure
To touch no kings; t' oppose their states becomes not jesters' parts.
But he the filthiest fellow was of all that had deserts
In Troy's brave siege. He was squint-eyed, and lame of either foot;
So crookbacked that he had no breast; sharp-headed, where did shoot
(Here and there 'spersed) thin, mossy hair. He most of all envied

Ulysses and Æacides, whom still his spleen would chide.
Nor could the sacred king himself avoid his saucy vein;
Against whom since he knew the Greeks did vehement hates sustain,
Being angry for Achilles' wrong, he cried out, railing thus:
"Atrides, why complain'st thou now? What wouldst thou more of us?
Thy tents are full of brass; and dames, the choice of all, are thine,
With whom we must present thee first, when any towns resign
To our invasion. Want'st thou, then, besides all this, more gold
From Troy's knights to redeem their sons, whom to be dearly sold
I or some other Greek must take? Or wouldst thou yet again
Force from some other lord his prize, to soothe the lusts that reign
In thy encroaching appetite? It fits no prince to be
A prince of ill, and govern us, or lead our progeny
By rape to ruin. Oh, base Greeks, deserving infamy,
And ills eternal, Greekish girls, not Greeks, ye are! Come, flee
Home with our ships; leave this man here to perish with his preys,
And try if we helped him or not. He wronged a man that weighs
Far more than he himself in worth. He forced from Thetis' son,
And keeps his prize still. Nor think I that mighty man hath won

The style of wrathful worthily; he's soft, he's too remiss;
Or else, Atrides, his had been thy last of injuries."
Thus he the people's pastor chid; but straight stood up to him
Divine Ulysses, who, with looks exceeding grave and grim,
This bitter check gave: "Cease, vain fool, to vent thy railing vein
On kings thus, though it serve thee well; nor think thou canst restrain,
With that thy railing faculty, their wills in least degree;
For not a worse, of all this host, came with our king than thee,
To Troy's great siege; then do not take into that mouth of thine
The names of kings, much less revile the dignities that shine
In their supreme states, wresting thus this motion for our home,
To soothe thy cowardice; since ourselves yet know not what will come
Of these designments, if it be our good to stay, or go.
Nor is it that thou stand'st on; thou revil'st our general so,
Only because he hath so much, not given by such as thou,
But our heroes. Therefore this thy rude vein makes me vow,
Which shall be curiously observed, if ever I shall hear
This madness from thy mouth again, let not Ulysses bear
This head, nor be the father called of young Telemachus,
If to thy nakedness I take and strip thee not, and thus
Whip thee to fleet from council; send, with sharp stripes, weeping hence
This glory thou affect'st to rail." This said, his insolence
He settled with his scepter; struck his back and shoulders so

That bloody wales rose. He shrunk round, and from his
eyes did flow
Moist tears, and, looking filthily, he sate, feared, smarted,
dried
His blubbered cheeks; and all the press, though grieved to
be denied
Their wished retreat for home, yet laughed delightsomely,
and spake
Either to other: "Oh, ye gods, how infinitely take
Ulysses' virtues in our good! Author of counsels, great
In ordering armies, how most well this act became his heat,
To beat from council this rude fool. I think his saucy spirit
Hereafter will not let his tongue abuse the sovereign merit,
Exempt from such base tongues as his."

—"*The Iliad.*"

The Battle of the Frogs and Mice

Attributed to Homer

NAMES OF THE MICE.

PSICHARPAX, *one who plunders granaries.*
TROXARTES, *a bread-eater.*
LICHOMYLE, *a licker of meal.*
PTERNOTROCTAS, *a bacon-eater.*
LICHOPINAX, *a licker of dishes.*
EMBASICHYTROS, *a creeper into pots.*
LICHENOR, *a name from licking.*
TROGLODYTES, *one who runs into holes.*
ARTOPHAGUS, *one who feeds on bread.*
TYROGLYPHUS, *a cheese-scooper.*
PTERNOGLYPHUS, *a bacon-scooper.*
PTERNOPHAGUS, *a bacon-eater.*
CNISSODIOCTES, *one who follows the steam of kitchens.*
SITOPHAGUS, *an eater of wheat.*
MERIDARPAX, *one who plunders his share.*

NAMES OF THE FROGS.

PHYSIGNATHUS, *one who swells his cheeks.*
PELEUS, *a name from mud.*
HYDROMEDUSE, *a ruler in the waters.*
HYPSIBOAS, *a loud bawler.*
PELION, *a name from mud.*
SEUTLÆUS, *called from the beet.*
POLYPHONUS, *a great babbler.*
LIMNOCHARIS, *one who loves the lake.*
CRAMBOPHAGUS, *a cabbage-eater.*
LIMNISIUS, *called from the lake.*
CALAMINTHIUS, *called from the herb.*
HYDROCHARIS, *one who loves the water.*
BORBOROCETES, *one who lies in the mud.*
PRASSOPHAGUS, *an eater of garlic.*
PELUSIUS, *named from mud.*
PELOBATES, *one who walks in the dirt.*
PRASSÆUS, *called from garlic.*
CRAUGASIDES, *named from croaking.*

To fill my rising song with sacred fire,
Ye tuneful nine, ye sweet celestial choir,
From Helicon's embowering height repair,
Attend my labors, and reward my prayer.

The dreadful toils of raging Mars I write,
The springs of contest and the fields of fight;
How threatening mice advanc'd with warlike grace,
And wag'd dire combats with the croaking race.
Not louder tumults shook Olympus' towers,
When earth-born giants dared immortal powers.
These equal acts an equal glory claim,
And thus the Muse records the tale of fame:
Once on a time, fatigued and out of breath,
And just escaped the stretching claws of death,
A gentle mouse, whom cats pursued in vain,
Flies swift of foot across the neighboring plain,
Hangs o'er a brink, his eager thirst to cool,
And dips his whiskers in the standing pool,
When near a courteous frog advanc'd his head,
And from the waters, hoarse resounding, said:
"What art thou, stranger, what the line you boast?
What chance hath cast thee panting on our coast?
With strictest truth let all thy words agree,
Nor let me find a faithless mouse in thee.
If worthy friendship, proffer'd friendship take,
And ent'ring view the pleasurable lake;
Range o'er my palace, in my bounty share,
And glad return from hospitable fare.
This silver realm extends beyond my sway,
And me, their monarch, all its frogs obey.
Great Physignathus I, from Peleus' race,
Begot in fair Hydromeduse' embrace,
Where, by the nuptial bank that paints his side,
The swift Eridanus delights to glide.
Thee, too, thy form, thy strength, and port proclaim
A sceptered king, a son of martial fame.

Then trace thy line, and aid my guessing eyes."
Thus ceas'd the frog, and thus the mouse replies:
"Known to the gods, the men, the birds that fly
Through wild expanses of the midway sky,
My name resounds; and, if unknown to thee,
The soul of great Psicharpax lives in me,
Of brave Troxartes' line, whose sleeky down
In love compress'd Lichomyle the brown.
My mother she, and princess of the plains
Where'er her father Pternotroctas reigns;
Born where a cabin lifts its airy shed,
With figs, with nuts, with varied dainties fed,
But since our natures naught in common know,
From what foundation can a friendship grow?
These curling waters o'er thy palace roll;
But man's high food supports my princely soul.
In vain the circled loaves attempt to lie
Conceal'd in flaskets from my curious eye;
In vain the tripe that boasts the whitest hue,
In vain the gilded bacon shuns my view;
In vain the cheeses, offspring of the pail,
Or honey'd cakes, which gods themselves regale;
And as in arts I shine, in arms I fight,
Mix'd with the bravest, and unknown to flight.
Though large to mine the human form appear,
Not man himself can smite my soul with fear;
Sly to the bed with silent steps I go,
Attempt his finger, or attack his toe,
And fix indented wounds with dextrous skill;
Sleeping he feels, and only seems to feel.
Yet have we foes which direful dangers cause,
Grim owls with talons arm'd, and cats with claws;

And that false trap, the den of silent fate,
Where death his ambush plants around the bait;
All dreaded these, and dreadful o'er the rest
The potent warriors of the tabby vest.
If to the dark we fly, the dark they trace,
And rend our heroes of the nibbling race.
But me, nor stalks, nor wat'rish herbs delight,
Nor can the crimson radish charm my sight,
The lake-resounding frogs' selected fare,
Which not a mouse of any taste can bear."

As thus the downy prince his mind express'd,
His answer thus the croaking king address'd:

"Thy words luxuriant on thy dainties rove,
And, stranger, we can boast of bounteous Jove;
We sport in water or we dance on land,
And, born amphibious, food from both command.
But trust thyself where wonders ask thy view,
And safely tempt those seas, I'll bear thee through;
Ascend my shoulders, firmly keep thy seat,
And reach my marshy court, and feast in state."

He said, and lean'd his back. With nimble bound
Leaps the light mouse, and clasps his arms around;
Then, wond'ring, floats, and sees with glad survey
The winding banks resembling ports at sea.
But when aloft the curling water rides,
And wets with azure wave his downy sides,
His thoughts grow conscious of approaching wo;
His idle tears with vain repentance flow;
His locks he rends, his trembling feet he rears,
Thick beats his heart with unaccustom'd fears;
He sighs, and, chill'd with danger, longs for shore;
His tail extended forms a fruitless oar.

Half drench'd in liquid death his prayers he spake,
And thus bemoan'd him from the dreadful lake;
"So pass'd Europa through the rapid sea,
Trembling and fainting all the venturous way;
With oary feet the bull triumphant rode,
And safe in Crete depos'd his lovely load.
Ah, safe at last! May thus the frog support
My trembling limbs to reach his ample court."
As thus he sorrows, death ambiguous grows.
Lo! from the deep a water-hydra rose;
He rolls his sanguin'd eyes, his bosom heaves,
And darts with active rage along the waves.
Confus'd, the monarch sees his hissing foe,
And dives to shun the sable fates below.
Forgetful frog! the friend thy shoulders bore,
Unskill'd in swimming, floats remote from shore.
He grasps with fruitless hands to find relief,
Supinely falls, and grinds his teeth with grief;
Plunging he sinks, and struggling mounts again,
And sinks and strives, but strives with fate in vain.
The weighty moisture clogs his hairy vest,
And thus the prince his dying rage express'd:
"Nor thou, that fling'st me floundering from thy back,
As from hard rocks rebounds the shattering wrack,
Nor thou shalt 'scape thy due, perfidious king!
Pursued by vengeance on the swiftest wing,
At land thy strength could never equal mine;
At sea to conquer, and by craft, was thine.
But heaven has gods, and gods have searching eyes;
Ye mice, ye mice, my great avengers rise!"
This said, he sighing gasp'd, and gasping died.
His death the young Lichopinax espied,

As on the flowery brink he pass'd the day,
Bask'd in the beam, and loiter'd life away.
Loud shrieks the mouse; his shrieks the shores repeat;
The nibbling nation learn their hero's fate.
Grief, dismal grief ensues; deep murmurs sound,
And shriller fury fills the deafen'd ground.
From lodge to lodge the sacred heralds run,
To fix their council with the rising sun;
Where great Troxartes crown'd in glory reigns,
And winds his lengthening court beneath the plains,
Psicharpax' father, father now no more!
For poor Psicharpax lies remote from shore.
Supine he lies! The silent waters stand,
And no kind billow wafts the dead to land!

When rosy-finger'd morn had ting'd the clouds,
Around their monarch mouse the nation crowds;
Slow rose the monarch, heav'd his anxious breast,
And thus the council, fill'd with rage, address'd:

"For lost Psicharpax much my soul endures;
'Tis mine the private grief, the public, yours.
Three warlike sons adorn'd my nuptial bed,
Three sons, alas, before their father dead!
Our eldest perish'd by the ravening cat,
As near my court the prince unheedful sat.
Our next, an engine fraught with danger drew;
The portal gaped, the bait was hung in view;
Dire arts assist the trap, the fates decoy,
And men unpitying kill'd my gallant boy.
The last, his country's hope, his parents' pride,
Plung'd in the lake by Physignathus, died.
Rouse all the war, my friends! Avenge the deed,
And bleed that monarch, and his nation bleed!"

His words in every breast inspir'd alarms,
And careful Mars supplied their host with arms.
In verdant hulls despoil'd of all their beans,
The buskin'd warriors stalk'd along the plains;
Quills, aptly bound, their bracing corselet made,
Faced with the plunder of a cat they flayed;
The lamp's round boss affords their ample shield;
Large shells of nuts their covering helmet yield;
And o'er the region, with reflected rays,
Tall groves of needles for their lances blaze.
Dreadful in arms the marching mice appear;
The wondering frogs perceive the tumult near,
Forsake the waters, thickening form a ring,
And ask, and harken, whence the noises spring;
When near the crowd, disclos'd to public view,
The valiant chief Embasichytros drew.
The sacred herald's scepter graced his hand,
And thus his words express'd his king's command:
"Ye frogs! The mice, with vengeance fir'd, advance,
And deck'd in armor shake the shining lance.
Their hapless prince by Physignathus slain,
Extends incumbent on the watery plain.
Then arm your host, the doubtful battle try;
Lead forth those frogs that have the soul to die!"
The chief retires, the crowd the challenge hear,
And proudly swelling, yet perplex'd, appear.
Much they resent, yet much their monarch blame,
Who, rising, spoke to clear his tainted fame:
"Oh, friends! I never forc'd the mouse to death,
Nor saw the gaspings of his latest breath.
He, vain of youth, our art of swimming tried,
And venturous in the lake the wanton died.

To vengeance now by false appearance led,
They point their anger at my guiltless head.
But wage the rising war by deep device,
And turn its fury on the crafty mice.
Your king directs the way; my thoughts elate
With hopes of conquest form designs of fate.
Where high the banks their verdant surface heave,
And the steep sides confine the sleeping wave,
There, near the margin, and in armor bright,
Sustain the first impetuous shocks of fight;
Then, where the dancing feather joins the crest,
Let each brave frog his obvious mouse arrest;
Each strongly grasping, headlong plunge a foe,
Till countless circles whirl the lake below.
Down sink the mice in yielding waters drown'd;
Loud flash the waters; echoing shores resound;
The frogs triumphant tread the conquer'd plain,
And raise their glorious trophies of the slain!"

He spake no more. His prudent scheme imparts
Redoubling ardor to the boldest hearts.
Green was the suit his arming heroes chose;
Around their legs the greaves of mallows close;
Green were the beets about their shoulders laid,
And green the colewort, which the target made;
Form'd of the varied shells the waters yield,
Their glossy helmets glisten'd o'er the field;
And tapering sea-reeds for the polish'd spear,
With upright order pierced the ambient air.
Thus dress'd for war, they take th' appointed height,
Poise the long arms, and urge the promis'd fight.

But now, where Jove's irradiate spires arise,
With stars surrounded in ethereal skies

(A solemn council call'd), the brazen gates
Unbar; the gods assume their golden seats;
The sire superior leans, and points to show
What wondrous combats mortals wage below;
How strong, how large, the numerous heroes stride,
What length of lance they shake with warlike pride,
What eager fire their rapid march reveals.
So the fierce centaurs ravaged o'er the dales,
And, so confirm'd, the daring Titans rose,
Heap'd hills on hills, and bade the gods be foes.
  This seen, the power his sacred visage rears;
He casts a pitying smile on worldly cares,
And asks what heavenly guardians take the list,
Or who the mice, or who the frogs assist.
  Then thus to Pallas: "If my daughter's mind
Have join'd the mice, why stays she still behind?
Drawn forth by savory steams they wind their way,
And sure attendance round thine altar pay,
Where, while the victims gratify their taste,
They sport to please the goddess of the feast."
  Thus spake the ruler of the spacious skies;
When, thus resolv'd, the blue-eyed maid replies:
"In vain, my father, all their dangers plead;
To such thy Pallas never grants her aid.
My flowery wreaths they petulantly spoil,
And rob my crystal lamps of feeding oil,
Ills following ills; but what afflicts me more,
My veil, that idle race profanely tore.
The web was curious, wrought with art divine.
Relentless wretches! all the work was mine.
Along the loom the purple warp I spread,
Cast the light shoot, and cross'd the silver thread;

In this their teeth a thousand breaches tear;
The thousand breaches skilful hands repair.
For which vile earthly duns thy daughter grieve,
But gods, that use no coin, have none to give.
And learning's goddess never less can owe;
Neglected learning gets no wealth below.
Nor let the frogs to gain my succor sue;
Those clamorous fools have lost my favor too.
For late, when all the conflict ceas'd at night,
When my stretch'd sinews ach'd with eager fight,
When, spent with glorious toil, I left the field,
And sank for slumber on my swelling shield,
Lo, from the deep, repelling sweet repose,
With noisy croakings half the nation rose;
Devoid of rest, with aching brow I lay,
Till cocks proclaim'd the crimson dawn of day.
Let all, like me, from either host forbear,
Nor tempt the flying furies of the spear.
Let heavenly blood, or what for blood may flow,
Adorn the conquest of a meaner foe,
Who, wildly rushing, meet the wondrous odds,
Though gods oppose, and brave the wounded gods;
O'er gilded clouds reclined, the danger view,
And be the wars of mortals scenes for you."

So mov'd the blue-eyed queen; her words persuade;
Great Jove assented, and the rest obeyed.

Now front to front the marching armies shine,
Halt ere they meet, and form the lengthening line;
The chiefs conspicuous seen, and heard afar,
Give the loud sign to loose the rushing war;
Their dreadful trumpets deep-mouth'd hornets sound,
The sounded charge remurmurs o'er the ground;

E'en Jove proclaims a field of horror nigh,
And rolls low thunder through the troubled sky.
First to the fight the large Hypsiboas flew,
And brave Lichenor with a javelin slew.
The luckless warrior, filled with generous flame,
Stood foremost glittering in the post of fame.
When in his liver struck, the javelin hung,
The mouse fell thundering and the target rung;
Prone to the ground he sinks his closing eye,
And soiled in dust his lovely tresses lie.
A spear at Pelion Troglodytes cast;
The missive spear within the bosom pass'd;
Death's sable shades the fainting frog surround,
And life's red tide runs ebbing from the wound.
Embasichytros felt Seutlæus' dart
Transfix and quiver in his panting heart;
But great Artophagus aveng'd the slain,
And big Seutlæus tumbling loads the plain;
And Polyphonus dies, a frog renown'd
For boastful speech, and turbulence of sound;
Deep through the belly pierced, supine he lay,
And breath'd his soul against the face of day.
The strong Limnocharis, who viewed with ire
A victor triumph and a friend expire,
With heaving arms a rocky fragment caught,
And fiercely flung where Troglodytes fought,
A warrior vers'd in arts of sure retreat;
Yet arts in vain elude impending fate:
Full on his sinewy neck the fragment fell,
And o'er his eyelids clouds eternal dwell.
Lichenor (second of the glorious name)
Striding advanced, and took no wand'ring aim;

Through the whole frog the shining javelin flies,
And near the vanquished mouse the victor dies.
The dreadful stroke Crambophagus affrights,
Long bred to banquets, less inur'd to fights;
Heedless he runs, and stumbles o'er the steep,
And wildly floundering flashes up the deep;
Lichenor following, with a downward blow
Reached, in the lake, his unrecovered foe;
Gasping he rolls, a purple stream of blood
Now stains the surface of the silver flood;
Through the wide wound the rushing entrails throng,
And slow the breathless carcass floats along.
Limnisius good Tyroglyphus assails,
Prince of the mice that haunt the flowery vales;
Lost to the milky fares and rural seat,
He came to perish on the bank of fate.
The dread Pternoglyphus demands the fight,
Which tender Calaminthius shuns by flight,
Drops the green target, springing quits the foe,
Glides through the lake, and safely dives below.
The dire Pternophagus divides his way
Through breaking ranks, and leads the dreadful day;
No nibbling prince excelled in fierceness more;
His parents fed him on the savage boar;
But where his lance the field with blood imbrued,
Swift as he mov'd Hydrocharis pursued,
Till fallen in death he lies; a shattering stone
Sounds on the neck, and crushes all the bone.
His blood pollutes the verdure of the plain,
And from his nostrils bursts the gushing brain.
Lichopinax with Borb'rocetes fights,
A blameless frog, whom humbler life delights;

The fatal javelin unrelenting flies,
And darkness seals the gentle croaker's eyes.
Incens'd Prassophagus with sprightly bound
Bears Cnissodioctes off the rising ground,
Then drags him o'er the lake, depriv'd of breath,
And downward plunging, sinks his soul to death.
But now the great Psicharpax shines afar,
(Scarce he so great whose loss provok'd the war);
Swift to revenge his fatal javelin fled,
And through the liver struck Pelusius dead;
His freckled corpse before the victor fell;
His soul indignant sought the shades of hell.
This saw Pelobates, and from the flood
Lifts with both hands a monstrous mass of mud;
The cloud obscene o'er all the warrior flies,
Dishonors his brown face, and blots his eyes.
Enrag'd, and wildly sputt'ring, from the shore
A stone immense of size the warrior bore,
A load for laboring earth, whose bulk to raise,
Asks ten degenerate mice of modern days;
Full to the leg arrives the crushing wound;
The frog, supportless, writhes upon the ground.
Thus flush'd, the victor wars with matchless force,
Till loud Craugasides arrests his course.
Hoarse croaking threats precede; with fatal speed
Deep through the belly runs the pointed reed,
Then, strongly tugg'd, return'd imbrued with gore,
And on the pile his reeking entrails bore.
The lame Sitophagus, oppress'd with pain,
Creeps from the desperate dangers of the plain;
And where the ditches rising weeds supply,
To spread their lowly shades beneath the sky,

There lurks the silent mouse reliev'd of heat,
And, safe embower'd, avoids the chance of fate.
But here Troxartes, Physignathus there,
Whirl the dire furies of the pointed spear;
Then, where the foot around its ankle plies,
Troxartes wounds, and Physignathus flies,
Halts to the pool, a safe retreat to find,
And trails a dangling length of leg behind.
The mouse still urges, still the frog retires,
And half in anguish of the flight expires.
Then pious ardor young Prassæus brings
Betwixt the fortune of contending kings.
Lank, harmless frog! with forces hardly grown,
He darts the reed in combats not his own,
Which, faintly tinkling on Troxartes' shield,
Hangs at the point, and drops upon the field.
Now, nobly towering o'er the rest, appears
A gallant prince that far transcends his years,
Pride of his sire, and glory of his house,
And more a Mars in combat than a mouse;
His action bold, robust his ample frame,
And Meridarpax his resounding name.
The warrior, singled from the fighting crowd,
Boasts the dire honors of his arms aloud;
Then, strutting near the lake, with looks elate,
Threats all its nations with approaching fate.
And such his strength, the silver lakes around
Might roll their waters o'er unpeopled ground.
But powerful Jove, who shows no less his grace
To frogs that perish than to human race,
Felt soft compassion rising in his soul,
And shook his sacred head, that shook the pole.

Then thus to all the gazing powers began
The sire of gods, and frogs, and mouse, and man:
"What seas of blood I view, what worlds of slain,
An Iliad rising from a day's campaign!
How fierce his javelin o'er the trembling lakes
The black-furr'd hero Meridarpax shakes!
Unless some favoring deity descend,
Soon will the frogs' loquacious empire end.
Let dreadful Pallas wing'd with pity fly,
And make her Ægis blaze before his eye;
While Mars, refulgent on his rattling car,
Arrests his raging rival of the war."
He ceas'd, reclining with attentive head,
When thus the glorious god of combats said:
"Nor Pallas, Jove! though Pallas take the field,
With all the terrors of her hissing shield,
Nor Mars himself, though Mars in armor bright
Ascend his car, and wheel amidst the fight—
Nor these can drive the desperate mouse afar,
And change the fortunes of the bleeding war.
Let all go forth, all heaven in arms arise,
Or launch thy own red thunder from the skies;
Such ardent bolts as flew that wondrous day,
When heaps of Titans mix'd with mountains lay,
When all the giant-race enormous fell,
And huge Enceladus was hurl'd to hell."
'Twas thus th' armipotent advis'd the gods,
When from his throne the cloud-compeller nods;
Deep lengthening thunders run from pole to pole,
Olympus trembles as the thunders roll.
Then swift he whirls the brandish'd bolt around,
And headlong darts it at the distant ground;

The bolt, discharg'd, enwrapp'd with lightning flies,
And rends its flaming passage through the skies;
Then earth's inhabitants, the nibblers, shake,
And frogs, the dwellers in the waters, quake.
Yet still the mice advance their dread design,
And the last danger threats the croaking line;
Till Jove, who inly mourn'd the loss they bore,
With strange assistance fill'd the 'frighted shore.
Pour'd from the neighboring strand, deform'd to view,
They march, a sudden, unexpected crew.
Strong suits of armor 'round their bodies close,
Which like thick anvils blunt the force of blows;
In wheeling marches turn'd oblique they go;
With harpy claws their limbs divide below.
Fell sheers the passage to their mouth command;
From out the flesh the bones by nature stand;
Broad spread their backs, their shining shoulders rise;
Unnumber'd joints distort their lengthen'd thighs;
With nervous cords their hands are firmly brac'd,
Their round black eyeballs in their bosom plac'd;
On eight long feet the wondrous warriors tread,
And either end alike supplies a head.
These, mortal wits to call the crabs agree;
The gods have other names for things than we.
Now, where the jointures from their loins depend,
The heroes' tails with severing grasps they rend.
Here, short of feet, depriv'd the power to fly,
There without hands upon the field they lie.
Wrench'd from their holds, and scatter'd all around,
The bended lances heap'd the cumber'd ground.
Helpless amazement, fear pursuing fear,
And mad confusion through their host appear;

O'er the wild waste with headlong flight they go,
Or creep conceal'd in vaulted holes below.
  But down Olympus to the western seas,
Far-shooting Phœbus drove with fainter rays,
And a whole war (so Jove ordain'd) begun,
Was fought, and ceas'd, in one revolving sun.

Fables Attributed to Æsop

The Wolf and the Lamb

DRIVEN by thirst, a wolf and a lamb had come to the same stream; the wolf stood above, and the lamb at a distance below. Then, the spoiler, prompted by a ravenous maw, invented a pretext for a quarrel. "Why," said he, "do you make the water muddy for me while I am drinking?" The fleece-bearer, trembling, answered, "Prithee, wolf, how can I do what you complain of? The water is flowing downward from you to where I am drinking." The other, disconcerted by the force of truth, exclaimed, "Six months ago you slandered me!" "Indeed," answered the lamb, "I was not born then." "By Hercules," said the wolf, "then it was your father slandered me!" And so, snatching him up, he tore him to pieces, killing him unjustly.

This fable is applicable to those men who oppress the innocent under false pretenses.

The Fox and the Stork

A FOX is said to have given a stork the first invitation to a banquet, and to have placed before her some thin broth in a flat dish, of which the hungry stork could in no way get a taste. Having invited the fox in return, she set before him a narrow-mouthed jar full of minced meat. Thrusting her beak into it, she ate heartily. Her guest was tormented with

hunger; who, after having in vain licked the neck of the jar, thus addressed the strange bird, "Every one is bound to bear patiently the consequences of his own example."

Harm should be done to no man; but if any one do an injury, this fable shows that he may be visited with a like return.

The Frog and the Ox

ONCE on a time a frog espied an ox in a meadow, and, moved with envy at his vast bulk, puffed out her wrinkled skin, and then asked her young ones whether she was bigger than the ox. They said "No." Again, with still greater efforts, she distended her skin, and in like manner inquired which was the bigger. They said, "The ox." At last, full of indignation, she tried to puff herself out with all her might, and burst her body on the spot.

The obscure man comes to ruin through trying to imitate the great.

The Mountain in Labor

A MOUNTAIN was in labor, sending forth tremendous groans, and there were the highest expectations in the district. After all, it brought forth a mouse.

This is addressed to those who, having threatened to achieve great things, produce nothing.

The Goat and the Fox

A FOX had through inadvertence fallen into a well, and was hemmed in by the sides, which were too high for her. A goat, parched with thirst, came to the same spot, and asked whether the water was good and plenteous. The other, devising a stratagem, replied, "Come down, my friend; such is the goodness of the water that my pleasure in drinking cannot be satisfied." Longbeard descended, when the fox, by mounting on his high horns, escaped from the well, and left the goat to stick fast below.

As soon as a crafty man has fallen into danger, he seeks to make his escape by the sacrifice of another.

The Dog and His Shadow

As a dog, crossing a bridge, was carrying a piece of meat in his mouth, he saw his own shadow in the watery mirror; and, thinking that it was another booty carried by another dog, attempted to snatch it away. But his greediness was disappointed, for he both dropped the food which he was holding in his mouth, and was after all unable to obtain that which he desired.

He who covets what belongs to another, deservedly loses his own.

Aristophanes

The Passage of the Styx

CHARON, BACCHUS, *and* XANTHIAS.

Cha. Hoy! Bear a hand there! Heave ashore!
Bac. What's this?
Xan. The lake it is—the place he told us of.
By Jove! and there's the boat—and here's old Charon!
Bac. Well, Charon! Welcome, Charon! Welcome kindly!
Cha. Who wants the ferryman? Anybody waiting
To leave the pangs of life? A passage, anybody?
To Lethe's wharf? To Cerberus' reach?
To Tartarus? To Tænarus? To Perdition?
Bac. Yes, I.
Cha. Get in then.
Bac. Tell me, where are you going?
To perdition, really?
Cha. Yes, to oblige you, I will—
With all my heart. Step in there.
Bac. Have a care!
Take care, good Charon! Charon, have a care!
(*Getting into the boat.*)
Come, Xanthias, come!
Cha. I take no slaves aboard,
Except they've volunteer'd for the naval victory.
Xan. I could not; I was suffering with sore eyes.
Cha. Off with you, round by the end of the lake.

Xan. And whereabouts shall I wait?

Cha. At the Stone of Repentance,
By the Slough of Despond, beyond the Tribulations.
You understand me?

Xan. Yes, I understand you—
A lucky, promising direction, truly.

Cha. (*to* BACCHUS). Sit down at the oar. Come, quick, if there are more coming!—
Hullo! what's that you're doing?

(BACCHUS *is seated in a buffoonish attitude in the side of the boat where the oar was fastened.*)

Bac. What you told me.
I'm sitting at the oar.

Cha. Sit *there,* I tell you,
You fatguts; that's your place.

Bac. (*changes his place*). Well, so I do.

Cha. Now ply your hands and arms.

Bac. (*makes a silly motion with his arms*). Well, so I do.

Cha. You'd best leave off your fooling. Take to the oar,
And pull away.

Bac. But how shall I contrive?
I've never served on board; I'm only a landsman;
I'm quite unused to it.

Cha. We can manage it.
As soon as you begin you shall have some music;
That will teach you to keep time.

Bac. What music's that?

Cha. A chorus of frogs—uncommon musical frogs.

Bac. Well, give me the word and the time.

Cha. Whooh, up, up! Whooh, up, up!

Chorus of Frogs.

Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
Shall the choral quiristers of the marsh
Be censured and rejected as hoarse and harsh,
And their chromatic essays
Deprived of praise?
No; let us raise afresh
Our obstreperous brekeke-kesh!
The customary croak and cry
Of the creatures
At the theaters
In their yearly revelry.
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. (*rowing in great misery*).
How I'm maul'd!
How I'm gall'd!
Worn and mangled to a mash—
There they go! Koash, koash!

Frogs. Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. Oh, beshrew,
All your crew!
You don't consider how I smart.

Frogs. Now for a sample of the art!
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. I wish you hanged, with all my heart!
Have you nothing else to say?
Brekeke-kesh, koash, all day!

Frogs. We've a right,
We've a right,
And we croak at ye for spite.

We've a right,
We've a right,
Day and night,
Day and night,
Night and day,
Still to creak and croak away.
Phœbus and every Grace
Admire and approve of the croaking race;
And the egregious guttural notes
That are gargled and warbled in their lyrical throats.
In reproof
Of your scorn,
Mighty Pan
Nods his horn;
Beating time
To the rime
With his hoof,
With his hoof.
Persisting in our plan,
We proceed as we began.
Brekeke-kesh, brekeke-kesh,
Koash, koash!

Bac. Oh, the frogs, consume and rot 'em!
I've a blister on my bottom!
Hold your tongues, you noisy creatures!

Frogs. Cease with your profane entreaties,
All in vain forever striving;
Silence is against our natures;
With the vernal heat reviving,
Our aquatic crew repair
From their periodic sleep,
In the dark and chilly deep,

To the cheerful upper air.
Then we frolic here and there
All amid the meadows fair;
Shady plants of asphodel
Are the lodges where we dwell;
Chanting in the leafy bowers
All the livelong summer hours,
Till the sudden gusty showers
Send us headlong, helter-skelter,
To the pool to seek for shelter.
Meager, eager, leaping, lunging,
From the sedgy wharfage plunging
To the tranquil depth below,
There we muster all a-row;
Where, secure from toil and trouble,
With a tuneful hubble-bubble,
Our symphonious accents flow.
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. I forbid you to proceed.

Frogs. That would be severe, indeed,
Arbitrary, bold, and rash—
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. I command you to desist—
Oh, my back, there! Oh, my wrist!
What a twist!
What a sprain!

Frogs. Once again
We renew the tuneful strain—
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. I disdain—hang the pain!—
All your nonsense, noise, and trash.
Oh, my blister! Oh, my sprain!

Frogs. Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
Friends and frogs, we must display
All our powers of voice to-day.
Suffer not this stranger here,
With fastidious, foreign ear,
To confound us and abash.
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. Well, my spirit is not broke;
If it's only for the joke,
I'll outdo you with a croak.
Here it goes—(*very loud*) Koash, koash!"

Frogs. Now for a glorious croaking crash,
(*still louder*)
Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. (*splashing with his oar*).
I'll disperse you with a splash.

Frogs. Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!

Bac. I'll subdue
Your rebellious, noisy crew—
Have among you there, slap-dash!
(*Strikes at them.*)

Frogs. Brekeke-kesh, koash, koash!
We defy your oar, and you.

Cha. Hold! We're ashore. Now shift your oar. Get out. Now pay your fare.

Bac. There—there it is—the twopence.

—"*The Frogs.*"

The New City

Chorus of Birds.

Ye children of man, whose life is a span,
Protracted with sorrow from day to day,
Naked and featherless, feeble and querulous,
Sickly, calamitous creatures of clay!
Attend to the words of the sovereign birds—
Immortal, illustrious, lords of the air—
Who survey from on high, with a merciful eye,
Your struggles of misery, labor, and care.
Whence you may learn and clearly discern
Such truths as attract your inquisitive turn;
Which is busied of late, with a mighty debate,
A profound speculation about the Creation,
And organical life, and chaotical strife,
With various notions of heavenly motions,
And rivers and oceans, and valleys and mountains,
And sources of fountains, and meteors on high,
And stars in the sky. We propose by and by—
If you'll listen and hear—to make it all clear.
And Prodicus henceforth shall pass for a dunce,
When his doubts are explained and expounded at once.

Before the creation of ether and light,
Chaos and night together were plight,
In the dungeon of Erebus foully bedight.
Nor ocean or air or substance was there,
Or solid or rare, or figure or form,

But horrible Tartarus ruled in the storm.
At length, in the dreary, chaotical closet
Of Erebus old, was a privy deposit,
By night the primeval in secrecy laid;
A mystical egg, that in silence and shade
Was brooded and hatched; till time came about,
And love, the delightful, in glory flew out,
In rapture and light, exulting and bright,
Sparkling and florid, with stars in his forehead,
His forehead and hair, and a flutter and flare,
As he rose in the air, triumphantly furnished
To range his dominions on glittering pinions,
All golden and azure, and blooming and burnished.
He soon, in the murky Tartarean recesses,
With a hurricane's might, in his fiery caresses
Impregnated chaos; and hastily snatched
To being and life, begotten and hatched,
The primitive birds; but the deities all,
The celestial lights, the terrestrial ball,
Were later of birth, with the dwellers on earth,
More tamely combined, of a temperate kind;
When chaotical mixture approached to a fixture.
Our antiquity proved, it remains to be shown
That love is our author and master alone;
Like him, we can ramble and gambol, and fly
O'er ocean and earth, and aloft to the sky;
And all the world over we're friends to the lover,
And when other means fail, we are found to prevail
When a peacock or pheasant is sent as a present.
All lessons of primary daily concern
You have learned from the birds, and continue to learn,
Your best benefactors and early instructors;

We give you the warning of seasons returning.
When the cranes are arranged, and muster afloat
In the middle air, with a creaking note,
Steering away to the Libyan sands,
Then careful farmers sow their lands;
The crazy vessel is hauled ashore,
The sail, the ropes, the rudder and oar
Are all unshipped, and housed in store.
The shepherd is warned, by the kite reappearing,
To muster his flock and be ready for shearing.
You quit your old cloak at the swallow's behest,
In assurance of summer, and purchase a vest.
For Delphi, for Ammon, Dodona—in fine,
For every oracular temple and shrine—
The birds are a substitute equal and fair,
For on us you depend, and to us you repair
For counsel and aid when a marriage is made,
A purchase, a bargain, a venture in trade.
Unlucky or lucky, whatever has struck ye,
An ox or an ass, that may happen to pass,
A voice in the street, or a slave that you meet,
A name or a word by chance overheard,
If you deem it an omen, you call it a bird;
And if birds are your omens, it clearly will follow
That birds are a proper prophetic Apollo.

Then take us as gods, and you'll soon find the odds;
We'll serve for all uses, as prophets and muses;
We'll give ye fine weather, we'll live here together;
We'll not keep away, scornful and proud, atop of a cloud,
In Jupiter's way, but attend every day,
To prosper and bless all you possess,

And all your affairs, for yourselves and your heirs.
And as long as you live we shall give
You wealth and health, and pleasure and treasure,
In ample measure;
And never bilk you of pigeon's milk,
Or potable gold. You shall live to grow old,
In laughter and mirth, on the face of the earth,
Laughing, quaffing, carousing, bousing;
Your only distress shall be the excess
Of ease and abundance and happiness.

. . . . . .

Enter PEISTHETAIRUS, EUELPIDES, EPOPS, *and* PRIEST.

Peis. Well, there it is! Such a comical set-out,
By Jove, I never saw!
Euel. Why, what's the matter?
What are you laughing at?
Peis. At your pen-feathers.
I'll tell ye exactly, now, the thing you're like:
You're just the perfect image of a goose,
Drawn with a pen in a writing-master's flourish.
Euel. And you're like a plucked blackbird to a tittle.
Peis. Well, then, according to the line in Æschylus,
"It's our own fault; the feathers are our own."
Euel. Come, what's to be done?
Epops. First we must choose a name,
Some grand, sonorous name, for our new city;
Then we must sacrifice.
Euel. I think so too.
Peis. Let's see—let's think of a name; what shall it be?
What say ye to the Lacedæmonian name?
Sparta sounds well. Suppose we call it Sparta?

Euel. Sparta! What *Sparto*—rushes? No, not I;
I'd not put up with *Sparto* for a mattress,
Much less for a city. We're not come to that.
Peis. Come, then, what name shall it be?
Euel. Something appropriate,
Something that sounds majestic, striking, and grand,
Alluding to the clouds and the upper regions.
Peis. What think ye of clouds and cuckoos? Cuckoo-cloudlands,
Or Nephelococcugia?
Epops. That will do;
A truly noble and sonorous name.
Euel. I wonder if that Nephelococcugia
Is the same place I've heard of? People tell me
That all Theagenes's rich possessions
Lie there, and Æschines's whole estate.
Peis. Yes, and a better country it is by far
Than all that land in Thrace, the fabulous plain
Of Phlegra, where those earth-born landed giants
Were bullied and outvapored by the gods.
Euel. It will be a genteelish, smart concern, I reckon,
This city of ours. Which of the deities
Shall we have for a patron? We must weave our mantle,
Our sacred mantle, of course, the yearly mantle,
To one or other of 'em.
Peis. Well, Minerva?
Why should not we have Minerva? She's established,
Let her continue; she'll do mighty well.
Euel. No; there I object; for a well-ordered city
The example would be scandalous—to see
The goddess, a female born, in complete armor
From head to foot; and Cleisthenes with a distaff!

Peis. What warden will ye appoint for the Eagle tower,
Your citadel, the fort upon the rock?

Epops. That charge will rest with a chief of our own choice,
Of Persian race, a chicken of the game,
An eminent warrior.

Euel. Oh, my chicky-biddy,
My little master! I should like to see him,
Strutting about and roosting on the rock.

Peis. Come you, now! Please to step to the atmosphere,
And give a look to the work, and help the workmen,
And between whiles fetch brick and tiles, and such like;
Draw water, stamp the mortar—do it barefoot;
Climb up the ladders; tumble down again;
Keep constant watch and ward; conceal your watch-lights;
Then go the rounds and give the countersign,
Till you fall fast asleep. Send heralds off,
A brace of them—one to the gods above,
And another, down below there to mankind.
Bid them, when they return, inquire for me.

Euel. For me! For me! You may be hanged for me.

Peis. Come, friend, go where I bid you; never mind;
The business can't go on without you, anyhow.
It's just a sacrifice to these new deities,
That I must wait for; and the priest that's coming.
Hullo, you boy there! Bring the basin and ewer.

Chor. We urge, we exhort you, and advise,
To ordain a mighty sacrifice,
And before the gods to bring
A stupendous offering;
Either a sheep, or some such thing,
To please the critics of the age,

Sacrificed upon the stage.
Sound amain the Pythian strain!
Let Chœris be brought here to sing.

Peis. Have done there with your puffing! Heaven and earth,
What's here! I've seen a many curious things,
But never saw the like of this before—
A crow with a flute and a mouthpiece. Priest, your office:
Perform it! Sacrifice to the new deities!

Priest. I will. But where's the boy gone with the basket?
Let us pray to the holy flame,
And the holy hawk that guards the same;
To the sovereign deities,
All and each, of all degrees,
Female and male!

Chor. Hail, thou hawk of Sunium, hail!

Priest. To the Delian and the Pythian swan,
And to the Latonian quail,
All hail!

Chor. To the bird of awful stature,
Mother of gods, mother of man;
Great Cybele, nurse of nature!
Glorious ostrich, hear our cry!
Fearful and enormous creature,
Hugest of all things that fly,
Oh, preserve and prosper us,
Thou mother of Cleocritus!
Grant the blessings that we seek
For us, and for the Chians' eke!

Peis. That's right, the Chians—don't forget the Chians!

Priest. To the heroes, birds, and heroes' sons,
We call at once, we call and cry;

To the woodpecker, the jay, the pie,
To the mallard and the widgeon,
To the ring-dove and the pigeon,
To the petrel and sea-mew,
To the dotterel and curlew,
To the vultures and the hawks,
To the cormorants and storks,
To the rail, to the quail,
To the pewit, to the tomtit.

Peis. Have done there! Call no more of 'em! Are you mad?
Inviting all the cormorants and vultures,
For a victim such as this! Why, don't you see,
A kite at a single swoop would carry it off?
Get out of my way there, with your crowns and fillets;
I'll do it myself! I'll make the sacrifice!

Priest. Then must I commence again,
In a simple, humble strain,
And invite the gods anew
To visit us—but very few,
Or only just a single one,
All alone,
In a quiet, easy way;
Wishing you may find enough,
If you dine with us to-day.
Our victim is so poor and thin,
Merely bones, in fact, and skin.

Peis. We sacrifice and pray to the winged deities.

Enter Poet.

Poet. "For the festive, happy day,
Muse, prepare an early lay
To Nephelococcugia."

Peis. What's here to do? What are you? Where do you come from?

Poet. An humble menial of the Muse's train,
As Homer expresses it.

Peis. A menial, are you?
With your long hair? A menial?

Poet. 'Tis not that.
No! But professors of the poetical art
Are simply styled the "Menials of the Muses,"
As Homer expresses it.

Peis. Aye, the Muse has given you
A ragged livery. Well, but, friend, I say—
Friend, poet, what the plague has brought you here?

Poet. I've made an ode upon your new-built city,
And a charming composition for a chorus,
And another in Simonides's manner.

Peis. When were they made? What time? How long ago?

Poet. From early date I celebrate in song
The noble Nephelococcugian state.

Peis. That's strange, when I'm just sacrificing here,
For the first time, to give the town a name.

Poet. Intimations, swift as air,
To the Muse's ear are carried,
Swifter than the speed and force
Of the fiery-footed horse;

Hence, the tidings never tarried.
Father, patron, mighty lord,
Founder of the rising state,
What thy bounty can afford,
Be it little, be it great,
With a quick resolve, incline
To bestow on me and mine.

Peis. This fellow will breed a bustle, and make mischief,
If we don't give him a trifle, and get rid of him.—
You there, you've a spare waistcoat; pull it off
And give it this same clever, ingenious poet!—
There, take the waistcoat, friend! Ye seem to want it.

Poet. Freely, with a thankful heart,
What a bounteous hand bestows,
Is received in friendly part;
But amid the Thracian snows,
Or the chilly Scythian plain,
He, the wanderer cold and lonely,
With an under-waistcoat only,
Must a further wish retain;
Which the Muse, averse to mention,
To your gentle comprehension
Trusts her enigmatic strain.

Peis. I comprehend it enough; you want a jerkin.—
Here, give him yours; one ought to encourage genius.—
There, take it, and good-by to ye!

Poet. Well, I'm going;
And as soon as I get to the town I'll set to work,
And finish something, in this kind of way:

"Seated on your golden throne,
Muse, prepare a solemn ditty,

To the mighty,
To the flighty,
To the cloudy, quivering, shivering,
To the lofty-seated city."

Peis. Well, I should have thought that jerkin might have cured him
Of his "quiverings and shiverings." How the plague
Did the fellow find us out? I should not have thought it.
Come, once again, go round with the basin and ewer.
Peace! Silence! Silence!

Enter SOOTHSAYER.

Sooth. Stop the sacrifice!
Peis. What are you?
Sooth. A soothsayer, that's what I am.
Peis. The worse luck for ye.
Sooth. Friend, are you in your senses?
Don't trifle absurdly with religious matters.
Here's a prophecy of Bakis, which expressly
Alludes to Nephelococcugia.
Peis. How came it, then, you never prophesied
Your prophecies before the town was built?
Sooth. The spirit withheld me.
Peis. And is it allowable now
To give us a communication of them?
Sooth. Hm!
"Moreover, when the crows and daws unite
To build and settle in the midway, right
Between tall Corinth and fair Sicyon's height,
Then to Pandora let a milk-white goat
Be slain, and offered, and a comely coat

Given to the soothsayer, and shoes a pair,
When he to you this oracle shall bear—"

Peis. Are the shoes mentioned?

Sooth. (*pretending to feel for his papers*). Look at the book, and see:

"—And let him have the entrails for his share."

Peis. Are the entrails mentioned?

Sooth. (*as before*). Look at the book, and see:

"If you, predestined youth, shall do these things,
Then you shall soar aloft on eagle's wings;
But if you do not, you shall never be
An eagle, nor a hawk, nor bird of high degree."

Peis. Is all this there?

Sooth. (*as before*). Look at the book, and see:

Peis. This oracle differs most remarkably
From that which I transcribed in Apollo's temple:

"If at the sacrifice which you prepare,
An uninvited vagabond should dare
To interrupt you, and demand a share,
Let cuffs and buffets be the varlet's lot.
Smite him between the ribs, and spare him not."

Sooth. What nonsense you're talking!

Peis. (*with the same action as the* SOOTHSAYER, *as if he were feeling for papers*). Look at the book, and see:

"Thou shalt in no wise heed them, or forbear
To lash and smite those eagles of the air,
Neither regard their names, for it is written,
Lampon and Diopithes shall be smitten."

Sooth. Is all this there?

Peis. (*producing a horsewhip*). Look at the book, and see!
Get out, with a plague and a vengeance!

Sooth. Oh, dear! Oh!
Peis. Go soothsay somewhere else, you rascal—run!
(*Exit* Soothsayer.)

Enter Meton *the Astronomer*

Met. I'm come, you see, to join you.
Peis. (*aside*). Another plague!
For what? What's your design—your plan—your notion—
Your scheme—your apparatus—your equipment—
Your outfit? What's the meaning of it all?
Met. I mean to take a geometrical plan
Of your atmosphere—to allot it, and survey it
In a scientific form.
Peis. In the name of Heaven,
Who are ye, and what? What name? What manner of man?
Met. Who am I, and what! Meton's my name, well known
In Greece, and in the village of Colonos.
Peis. But tell me, pray: these implements, these articles,
What are they meant for?
Met. These are *instruments*—
An atmospherical geometrical scale.
First, you must understand that the atmosphere
Is formed—in a manner—altogether—partly,
In the fashion of a furnace, or a funnel.
I take this circular arc with the movable arm,
And so, by shifting it round till it coincides
At the angle— You understand me?
Peis. Not in the least.
Met. I obtain a true division, with the quadrature

Of the equilateral circle. Here, I trace
Your market-place, in the center, with the streets
Converging inward—and the roads diverging
From the circular wall, without—like solar rays
From the circular circumference of the sun.

Peis. (*in a pretended soliloquy; then calling to him with a tone of mystery and alarm*).

Another Thales! Absolutely, a Thales!—
Meton!

Met. (*startled*). Why, what's the matter?

Peis. You're aware
That I've a regard for you. Take my advice:
Don't be seen here; withdraw yourself—abscond!

Met. Is there any alarm or risk?

Peis. Why, much the same
As it might be in Lacedæmon. There's a bustle
Of expelling aliens; people are dragged out
From the inns and lodgings, with a deal of uproar,
And blows and abuse in plenty to be met with
In the public street.

Met. A popular tumult, eh?

Peis. Oh, fie! No, nothing of that kind!

Met. How do you mean, then?

Peis. We're carrying into effect a resolution,
Adopted lately, to discard and cudgel
Coxcombs and mountebanks of every kind.

Met. Perhaps, then, I had best withdraw.

Peis. Why, yes, *perhaps;*
But yet, I would not answer for it neither;
Perhaps you may be too late; the blows I mentioned
Are coming—close upon you. There they come!

Met. Oh, bless me!

Peis. Did not I tell you, and give you warning?
Get out, you coxcomb! find out by your geometry
The road you came, and measure it back. You'd best.
(*Exit* METON.)

Enter a COMMISSIONER *from Athens.*

Com. Is nobody here?—none of the proxeni,
To receive and attend upon me?
Peis. What's all this?
Sardanapalus in person come among us!
Com. I come, appointed as commissioner
To Nephelococcugia.
Peis. A commissioner!
What brings you here?
Com. A paltry scrap of paper,
A trifling, silly decree, that sent me away
Here to this place of yours.
Peis. Well, now, suppose,
To make things easy on both sides, could not you
Just take your salary at once, and so return
Without any further trouble?
Com. Truly, yes;
I've other affairs at home: a speech, and a motion,
That I meant to have made in the general Assembly,
About a business that I took in hand
On the part of my friend Pharnaces, the satrap.
Peis. Agreed, then, and farewell. Here, take your salary.
Com. What's here?
(PEISTHETAIRUS *has held out his left hand, as if with an offer of money; he grasps the right hand of the* COMMISSIONER, *and with this advantage proceeds to buffet him.*)

Peis. A motion on the part of Pharnaces!
Com. Bear witness here! I'm beaten and abused
In my character of commissioner! (*Exit* COMMISSIONER.)
Peis. Get out,
With your balloting-box and all! It's quite a shame,
Quite scandalous! They send commissioners here
Before we've finished our first sacrifice.

Enter HAWKER.

Haw. "Moreover, if a Nephelococcugian
Should assault or smite an Athenian citizen—"
Peis. What's this? What's all this trumpery paper here?
Haw. I've brought you the new laws and ordinances,
And copies of the last decrees to sell.
Peis. Let's hear 'em.
Haw. "It is enacted and ordained
That the Nephelococcugians shall use
Such standard weights and measures—"
Peis. Friend, you'll find
Hard *measure* here, and a heavy *weight,* I promise you,
Upon your shoulders shortly.
Haw. What's the matter?
What's come to you?
Peis. Get out with your decrees!
I've bloody decrees against you, dire decrees.
(*Drives him off.*)
Com. (*returning*). I summon Peisthetairus to his answer
In an action of assault and battery,
For the first day of the month Munichion.
Peis. Ha, say you so? You're there again! Have at you. (*Drives him off.*)

Haw. (*returning*). "And in case of any assault or violence
Against the person of the magistrate—"
Peis. Bless me! What, you! You're there again?
(*Drives him off.*)
Com. (*returning again*). I'll ruin you;
I'll lay my damages at ten thousand drachmas.
Peis. In the meantime I'll smash your balloting-boxes.
Com. Remember how you effaced the public monument
On the pillar, and defiled it late last night.
Peis. Pah! Stuff! There, seize him, somebody! What, you're off too?
Come, let's remove, and get away from hence,
And sacrifice our goat to the gods within doors.
—"*The Birds.*"

Theophrastus

Of Vainglory

The sort of vainglory which is conversant with minute and frivolous matters may be called a vulgar and foolish affectation of honor. A person affected with this vice, when he is invited to a feast, strives to sit next him that gives the banquet. He takes his son to Delphos, where he cuts off his hair and consecrates it to some god. He loves to have a black for his footman. When he pays a sum, it is all in new money. When he has sacrificed an ox, he takes the fore part of the head, and, adorning it with ribbons and flowers, fixes it without doors at the entrance of his house, that every one may see and know what he has sacrificed. Upon returning from a cavalcade in which he and other citizens have taken part, he sends all his equipage home except his robe of state, in which he struts about all the rest of the day in the public places of the city. When his little dog dies, he has a formal burial, and erects a tomb for it, with this epitaph: "He was of the Malta breed." He consecrates a brass ring to Æsculapius, to which he hangs garlands of all sorts of flowers. He perfumes himself all over every day. During the time of his magistracy he uses a great deal of caution and circumspection, and when he goes out of office he gives the people an account of his management of affairs, and how many and of what sort his sacrifices were. Being clad in a white robe, and having a garland of flowers on his head, he goes out and makes a speech to the people: "Oh, Athenians, we magistrates have sacrificed to the mother of the gods, and paid her all the

solemn worship that is due to her! Therefore you may justly expect everything to proceed prosperously with you." This done, he goes home and tells his wife that he has come off with great applause and approbation.

—*" The Characters."*

Of Slovenliness

This vice is a lazy and beastly negligence of a man's person, whereby he becomes so filthy as to be offensive to those who are about him. You'll see him come into a company when he is covered all over with a leprosy or scurf, or with very long nails, and he says those distempers are hereditary, that his father and grandfather had them before him. He will speak with his mouth full, and gurgle at his cup in drinking. He will intrude into the best company in ragged clothes. If he goes with his mother to the soothsayers, he cannot even then refrain from coarse and profane expressions. When he is making his oblations at the temple, he will let the dish fall out of his hand, and laugh as at some jocular exploit. At the finest concert of music he cannot forbear clapping his hands and making a rude noise. He will pretend to sing along with the singers, and rail at them when they leave off.—*" The Characters."*

Of Loquacity

If we would define loquacity, it is an excessive affluence of words. The prater will not suffer any person in company to tell his own story, but, let it be what it will, tells you

you mistake the matter, that he takes the thing right, and that if you will listen, he will make it clear to you. If you make any reply, he suddenly interrupts you, saying, "Why, sir, you forget what you were talking about; it's very well you should begin to remember, since it is most beneficial for people to inform one another." Then presently he says, "But what was I going to say? Why, truly, you very soon apprehend a thing, and I was waiting to see if you would be of my sentiment in this matter." And thus he always takes such occasions as these to prevent the person he talks with the liberty of breathing. After he has thus tormented all who will hear him, he is so rude as to break into the company of persons met to discuss important affairs, and drives them away by his troublesome impertinence. Thence he goes into the public schools and places of exercise, where he interrupts the masters by his foolish prating, and hinders the scholars from improving by their instruction. If any person shows an inclination to go away, he will follow him, and will not part from him till he comes to his own door. If he hears of anything transacted in the public assembly of the citizens, he runs up and down to tell it to everybody. He gives you a long account of the famous battle that was fought when Aristophanes the orator was governor, or when the Lacedæmonians were under the command of Lysander; then tells you with what general applause he made a speech in public, repeating a great deal of it, with invectives against the common people, which are so tiresome to those that hear him that some forget what he says as soon as it is out of his mouth, others fall asleep, and others leave him in the midst of his harangue. If this talker be sitting on the bench, the judge will be unable to determine matters. If he's at the theater, he'll neither let you hear nor see anything; nor

will he even permit him that sits next to him at the table to eat his meat. He declares it very hard for him to be silent, his tongue being so very well hung that he'd rather be accounted as garrulous as a swallow than be silent, and patiently bears all ridicule, even that of his own children, who, when they want to go to rest, request him to talk to them that they may the sooner fall asleep.

—*"The Characters."*

Lucian

Sailing on Treetops

About midnight, the sea being very calm, we unawares fell foul of a prodigious large halcyon's nest, which might be in compass about sixty *stadia*. The halcyon happened then to be sitting on her eggs, and was not much less in bulk than her nest. As she took flight she was very near oversetting our ship by the wind of her wings. As she flew away she made a most doleful cry. As soon as it was day we got out for the purpose of inspecting the nest, which we found to be built entirely of trees wattled, and resembling a huge float. In it were fifty eggs, each larger than a ton of Chios measure, and the young birds were already visible, and could be distinctly heard chirping within. We cut open one of these eggs with the carpenter's ax, and drew out the unfledged young one, which was stronger than twenty vultures.

We had not sailed more than two hundred *stadia* from the nest when we were surprised with several strange and exceedingly amazing prodigies. The goose which ornamented the prow of our ship suddenly began flapping its wings, and cackled aloud. Our steersman, Scintharus, whose pate was as bald as the palm of the hand, instantaneously recovered his fine head of hair; and, what was more wonderful than all the rest, our mast began to sprout, put out branches, and at the maintop bore figs and clusters of grapes, though not yet quite ripe. You may imagine how greatly we were astonished at this sight, and how fervently we prayed the

gods to avert the calamity from us of which that might be the omen. Proceeding on, before we had gone five hundred *stadia* farther we descried a vast and thick forest of pines and cypresses. At first we took it for firm land; but it was a deep sea, planted with trees that had no roots; notwithstanding which, the trees stood upright and immovable, or seemed rather floating toward us. On making up to it, in order to survey it accurately, and finding how matters stood, we were at a loss to know what measures to take. To succeed in getting through the trees was altogether impossible, they stood so thick and grew so close together; and to turn about seemed not advisable. I therefore climbed up the tallest of these trees in order to look about me on all sides to discover, if I could, what was beyond; and perceived that the wood extended fifty *stadia* and more, and then appeared another ocean to receive us. Wherefore it occurred all at once to me to hoist our ship on the tops of the trees, which were uncommonly thick, and drag it, if possible, over them into the sea beyond. No sooner thought of than done. We fastened to our ship a strong rope, got up the trees, and drew it, though with immense labor, up to us; then settling it on the topmost boughs, we spread all sails, and sailed with a fair brisk gale behind us, as commodiously as if we were still on the water.

When we had at length got over the wood, we came again upon the sea, let fall our ship, and proceeded through crystalline pellucid water till we were forced to stop by a vast gulf formed by a fissure of the water, which was somewhat of a similar kind with what on land is called a chasm, or great cleft made by an earthquake or other means. We came so suddenly upon the brim that the vessel narrowly escaped tumbling into this abyss, which would infallibly have been

the case if we had not struck sail at that instant. On stooping down to look into it, we beheld a depth of a thousand *stadia* at least, at which we were all lost in amazement. Casting our eyes to the right, however, we perceived at a distance an aquatic bridge thrown over this abyss, which joined the sea on this side and on the other together. Plying our oars, therefore, with all our might, we brought up our vessel to this bridge, and, what we could not have ventured to hope, happily, though with unspeakable labor, got her over.—*The "True History."*

A Question of Precedence

ZEUS, ÆSCULAPIUS, *and* HERACLES.

Zeus. Do, Æsculapius and Heracles, stop your wrangling, in which you indulge as if you were a couple of mortals; for this sort of behavior is unseemly, and quite strange to the banquets of the gods.

Heracles. But, Zeus, would you have that quack drug-dealer there take his place at table above me?

Æsculapius. By Zeus, yes, for I am certainly the better man.

Heracles. How, you thunderstruck fellow, is it, pray, because Zeus knocked you on the head with his bolt for your unlawful actions, and because now, out of mere pity, by way of compensation, you have got a share of immortality?

Æsculapius. What! have you, for your part, Heracles, altogether forgotten your having been burned to ashes on Mount Œta, that you throw in my teeth this fire you talk of?

Heracles. We have not lived at all an equal or similar sort of life—I, who am the son of Zeus, and have undergone so many and great labors, purifying human life, contending against and conquering wild beasts, and punishing insolent and injurious men; whereas you are a paltry herb-doctor and mountebank, skilful, possibly, in palming off your miserable drugs upon sick fools, but who have never given proof of any noble, manly disposition.

Æsculapius. You say well, seeing I healed your burns when you came up but now half-burned, with your body all marred and destroyed by the double cause of your death—the poisoned shirt, and afterward the fire. Now I, if I have done nothing else, at least have neither worked like a slave, as you have, nor have I carded wool in Lydia, dressed in a fine purple gown; nor have I been beaten by that Omphale of yours, with her golden slipper. No, nor did I, in a mad fit, kill my children and my wife!

Heracles. If you don't stop your ribald abuse of me at once, you shall very speedily learn your immortality will not avail you much; for I will take and pitch you head first out of heaven, so that not even the wonderful Pæon himself shall cure you and your broken skull.

Zeus. Have done, I say, and don't disturb the harmony of the company, or I will pack both of you off from the supper-room; although, to speak the truth, Heracles, it is fair and reasonable Æsculapius should have precedence of you at table, inasmuch as he even took precedence of you in death.—*"Dialogues of the Gods."*

Odysseus's Trick on Polyphemus

POSEIDON *and* POLYPHEMUS.

Polyphemus. Oh, father, what have I endured at the hands of the cursed stranger, who made me drunk and put out my eye, assaulting me when I was lulled to sleep!

Poseidon. Who dared to do this, my poor Polyphemus?

Polyphemus. In the first instance, he called himself Outis; but when he had got clear away, and was out of reach of my arrow, he said that his name was Odysseus.

Poseidon. I know whom you speak of—him of Ithaca, and he was on his return voyage from Ilium. But how did he do it, for he is by no means a man of too much courage?

Polyphemus. Returning from my accustomed attending of my flock, I caught a number of fellows in my cave, evidently having designs on my herds; for when I placed the stone block against the door—the rock is of huge size—and had lighted the fire by igniting the tree which I brought from the mountain, evidently they appeared to be trying to conceal themselves. Well, when I had got hold of some of them I devoured them for a pack of thieves, as was reasonable. Hereupon that most villainous rascal, whether he was Outis or Odysseus, pours out a sort of drug and gives me to drink—sweet, indeed, and of delicious smell, but most insidious, and which caused great disorder in my head; for, immediately upon my drinking, everything seemed to me to be in a whirl, and the cave itself was turned upside down, and I was no longer at all in my senses; and at last I was

dragged down into sleep. Then sharpening the bar, and igniting it besides, he blinded me as I slept, and from that time I am a blind man, at your service, Poseidon.

Poseidon. How soundly you slept, my son, that you did not jump up while you were being blinded! But as for this Odysseus, then, how did he escape? For he could not —I am well assured that he could not—move away the rock from the door.

Polyphemus. Yes, but it was I who removed it, that I might the better catch him as he was going out; and, sitting down close to the door, I groped for him with extended hands, letting only my sheep go out to pasture, after having given instructions to the ram what he was to do in my place.

Poseidon. I perceive: they slipped away unnoticed, under the sheep. But you ought to have shouted, and called the rest of the Cyclopes to your aid.

Polyphemus. I did summon them, father, and they came. But when they asked the sneaking rascal's name, and I said it was Outis, thinking I was in a mad fit, they took themselves off at once. Thus the cursed fellow tricked me with his name; and what especially vexes me is, that he actually threw my misfortune in my teeth. "Not even," said he, "will your father Poseidon cure you."

Poseidon. Never mind, my child, for I will revenge myself upon him; he shall learn that, even if it is not possible for me to heal the mutilation of people's eyes, at all events the fate of voyagers is in my hands. And he is still at sea.

—"*Dialogues of the Sea-Gods.*"

The Olympians Discuss the Philosophers

I HAD scarcely flown a bow-shot, when Luna, in a delicate feminine voice, called after me, "Speed you well, Menippus! May this ascension of yours have a happy issue! Be so good as to take a small commission with you to Jupiter."

"With all my heart," answered I, "provided it be not too heavy."

"Nothing more," she replied, "than to convey for me a petition to Jupiter. I can no longer bear to be ill-treated by the philosophers. One would think they had nothing else to do but to meddle with my affairs, by asking who I am, and how big, broad, and long I am, and why at particular times I look like half a plate, or get horns. Some of them say I am inhabited, others that I hang like a looking-glass over the sea; in short, every one says of me what he pleases. The worst of it is, they spread a report among the common people that my light is not genuine, and that I steal it from the sun; so that no thanks to them if my brother is not suspicious of me, and mischief be created between us. As if it were not enough to cast obloquy upon the sun, by pretending that he is a stone or a glowing, hot mass. Yet, truly, the philosophers have no reason to treat me so scurvily! For what shameful doings in the night-time could I relate of them, though by day they look so serious and severe, walk along so gravely, and artfully win such profound respect from the ignorant! And yet I am content to be a silent spectator of all these matters, because I think it not decent to disclose and divulge the contrast of their nocturnal

deeds with their public demeanor. On the contrary, when I spy them employed in acts of adultery, robbery, or any such like works of darkness, I immediately veil myself in a thick cloud, that it may not be manifest to the world how much these aged folks disgrace their long beards, and that virtue which they have ever at their tongues' ends. They, notwithstanding, never cease speaking disparagingly of me, and abusing me in all manner of ways; so that I swear by old Night I have sometimes had it in my mind to retire as far as possible from hence, in order to avoid their impertinent remarks. Forget not, therefore, to acquaint Jupiter with all this, and to tell him, further, that it is impossible for me to remain longer at my post, unless he shatters the heads of these naturalists, stops the mouths of these logicians, blows up the Stoa, sets fire to the Academy, and puts an end to the disputations in the Peripatus—in a word, grants me some respite from the daily insults of the geometrical reasoners."

I promised her to do all she desired, and shaped my course directly for heaven. In a little time even the moon appeared very small, and the earth was quite hid behind it. Leaving the sun on my right, and flying through the midst of the stars, on the third day I reached the roadstead of heaven. Because, on account of my vulture's wing, I dared not hope to be taken for Jupiter's eagle, I would not venture to fly directly into the empyreal castle, and therefore knocked at the door. Mercury presently came out, and having asked my name, went back with all speed and delivered it to Jupiter. I was soon called in. Trembling and quaking, I entered the hall of audience, where I found all the gods assembled, not much less alarmed than myself, talking of my extraordinary journey, probably suspecting that shortly

the whole human race might in the same manner come flying to them. Jupiter then, looking at me with a stern, terrific countenance, asked:

"Tell, who
Art thou? Thy country, where? Thy parents, who?"

I thought I should have died upon the spot with affright. I stood abashed and stupefied, as if thunderstruck at his voice. After a little pause, however, I came to myself, and related the whole story from the beginning: how desirous I was to examine into superterrestrial affairs; how I had applied to the philosophers, and what contradictions I found among them; the distraction of my mind in consequence; my curious device thereupon; how I had fastened wings to my arms, and the whole history of my journey. In conclusion I delivered the message I had received from Luna. At this Jupiter smoothed his brow a little, and, smiling, said:

"What shall we henceforth object against Otus and Ephialtes, since even Menippus has had the presumption to ascend to heaven? For this day, however," continued his Majesty, "you are our guest. The business you are come upon we will take into consideration to-morrow and grant you a gracious dismissal."

At these words, rising up, he repaired to that part of Olympus where he customarily listens to the prayers of mortals. On the way he asked me how matters stood at present upon the earth. What was the price of wheat. Whether the last had been a hard winter, and whether the grass wanted more rain. Then, whether any one of the posterity of Phidias was still in being, and why the Athenians, who were wont annually to celebrate the Diasia, had

of late years given up that custom. Again, whether they did not intend to construct their Olympic temple, and whether the thieves that robbed the temple at Dodona were taken.

After I had answered these interrogations he proceeded:

"Very well, Menippus, now tell me honestly what do mankind think of me?"

"How should they think of you, gracious sovereign," answered I, "but the most religiously that can possibly be conceived: that you are the king of all the gods!"

"That you will never persuade me to believe," replied Jupiter. "I know very well, however you may wish to conceal it, how inclined they are in all things to innovations. There was indeed a time when I was their soothsayer, their physician, their all in all; 'when streets and fairs and all was full of Jove'; when Dodona and Pisa shone resplendent above all the temples in the world; when the eyes of all men were turned upon them, and burnt offerings were presented to me in such numbers that I could scarcely open my eyes for the smoke of them. But since Apollo has set up his office of intelligence at Delphi, and Æsculapius has opened his apothecary's shop at Pergamus; since there has been a temple of Bendis in Thrace, of Anubis in Egypt, and of Diana at Ephesus; since all flock thither, the feasts celebrated in honor of them, and the hecatombs slaughtered are endless, I am considered as old and superannuated, and sufficiently honored if a yoke of bulls are sacrificed to me once in five years. Hence you see that even Plato's laws and the syllogisms of Chrysippus are not colder than my altars."

While this conversation lasted we arrived at the place where he was to sit down and give audience to mankind. There were apertures, resembling the mouths of wells, at regular intervals, provided with covers, and by every one of

them stood a golden chair of state. On the first chair Jupiter now seated himself, lifted up the cover, and gave ear to the supplicants. Many and diverse were the prayers that came up to him from every region upon earth, some of them impossible to be granted at the same time. I also, stooping down on the side contiguous to the opening, could distinctly hear:

"Oh, Jupiter, let me be a king! Oh, Jupiter, let my onions and garlic thrive this year! Oh, Jupiter, let my father speedily depart hence!"

Another cried out, "Oh, that I could soon be rid of my wife!"

Another again, "Oh, that I might succeed in my plot against my brother!"

A third prayed for a happy issue to his lawsuit; a fourth wanted to be crowned at Olympia; one seaman prayed for a north wind; another for a south wind; a husbandman for rain; a fuller for sunshine. Father Jupiter harkened to them all, and after having accurately examined every man's petition, to some

"He nodded aye, to others answered no."

The equitable requests were admitted through the aperture, and deposited on the right hand; the iniquitous and futile he puffed back ere they had reached the skies. With respect to one alone I perceived him very much puzzled. Two parties preferred petitions for favors in direct opposition to one another, at the same time both promising equal sacrifices. For want, therefore, of a decisive reason why he should favor either the one or the other, he was in the predicament of the Academics, not knowing to which he should say aye, but was forced with honest Pyrrho to suspend his

judgment, and dismissed the matter by saying, "We shall see." Having done with hearing prayers, he rose up, and seated himself in the second chair adjoining to the second aperture, to lend his attention to oaths, protestations, and vows. When it was over, and after having on this occasion smashed the Epicurean Hermodorus's head with a thunderbolt, he went on to the third chair, where he gave audience to presages, prognostications, divinations, and auguries. That done, he proceeded to the fourth, through which the fumes of the victims ascended, wafting to him severally the names of the sacrificers. This business being despatched, the winds and storms were admitted, and orders given to each what it was to do; as, "To-day let it rain in Scythia, thunder and lightning in Africa, and snow in Greece. You, Boreas, blow toward Lydia. You, south wind, shall have a day of rest. The west wind will raise a tempest in the Adriatic. Let a thousand bushels of hail, or thereabouts, be scattered on Cappadocia"—and the like. All these affairs being now settled, it was just the time for going to table. Mercury, who officiated as grand marshal at the court of heaven, assigned me my place with Pan and the Corybantes, between Atys and Sabazius, as new-made gods of rather equivocal origin. I was regaled by Ceres with bread, by Bacchus with wine, by Hercules with meat, by Venus with myrtle-berries, and by Neptune with anchovies. I had a taste also by chance of nectar and ambrosia; for the beautiful Ganymede, from pure philanthropy, conveyed to me, at two several times, a cup of nectar, while Jupiter was looking the other way. But the gods, as Homer says, who probably had seen how they live as well as I,

"Neither eat bread nor drink the purple wine,"

but feed upon ambrosia, and get fuddled with nectar; their most palatable diet, however, is the relishing savor of a sacrifice, and the warm steam arising from the blood of the victims shed upon the altars. During the repast Apollo played upon the harp, Silenus did a comic dance, and the Muses stood up and sang to us the Theogony of Hesiod and the first hymn of Pindar. At last, having fared sumptuously, we stretched ourselves on the couches, well wined,

> "And calmly slept, both gods and earthly men,
> The whole night through. My wakeful eyes alone
> Found no repose,"

so full of thought was I on the wonderful adventures that had happened to me.

What principally ran in my head was how Apollo could live to that age and have no beard, and how it could be night in heaven, since the sun was present and had been carousing with us. At last, however, I fell into a gentle doze. Jupiter, getting up early in the morning, ordered the herald to summon a council of the gods; and as soon as it was assembled he began in the following manner:

"I have long intended to consult you on the subject of the philosophers; but now being particularly incited to it by the complaints transmitted to us from Luna, I have resolved to defer the discussion of that affair no longer. Know, then, there has lately sprung up a set of people floating like scum upon human society, who arrogate to themselves that title, though, in fact, they are no better than a lazy, quarrelsome, vainglorious, splenetic, gluttonous, haughty, conceited, and ill-bred crew, and, to use an Homerical expression, a useless burden on the earth. These people, who, having nothing else to do, contrive labyrinths

of argumentation wherein they mutually endeavor to entangle one another, have split themselves into sundry gangs, known under the appellations of Stoics, Academics, Epicureans, Peripatetics, and other still more ridiculous titles. Covering themselves with the venerable name of virtue, they strut about the world with elevated brows and pendulous beards, and hide the most despicable manners under a varnished outside, like a tragic actor, of whom, when stripped of vizor and embroidered robe, nothing remains but a miserable fellow who for seven drachmas is hired to play the hero.

"Now, these are the men who look down upon others with contempt, babble insipid stuff respecting the gods, and cant about their far-famed virtue in a tone of tragical declamation to a crowd of simple, credulous youths, and teach them the vile art of confounding the common sense of mankind by captious sophistries. To their scholars, indeed, they preach up patience and temperance, and paint them in glowing colors, and speak of riches and pleasure with the utmost contempt and abhorrence; but who would not be ashamed to reveal in words what is done to them in secret? But the most insufferable of all is that these people, who neither in public nor in private life are of any use, but are in every respect the most supernumerary and unprofitable of all men, and, to speak with Homer, are

"'Useless in council, as unfit for arms,'

that such people, I say, should be the bitterest revilers of their fellow beings, and, under the assumed character of moral censors, take the liberty to deal out their abuse upon all mankind; so that he is not a little proud of his superiority who can scold the loudest and calumniate the most unblushingly.

"If you should ask one of these declaimers, 'What, then, I beseech you, are you good for yourself? What in all the world do you contribute to the general emolument?'—if he would speak the truth he must answer, 'Although I think it not necessary either to till the ground, or to carry on trade, or to perform military service, or to make profession of any other art, yet I roar out upon all men, live in dirtiness, bathe in cold water, go barefoot in winter, and carp like Momus at all that other men do. Has any rich man given a splendid entertainment, or does he keep a mistress, I blab it abroad and raise a terrible outcry upon it; whereas, if a friend is sick, and wants my assistance, I take no notice of him.' Now, I should be glad to know, ye gods, why we should continue to fodder such cattle? And the set of them who call themselves Epicureans are unquestionably the most insolent of all; for they touch us to the quick by affirming that we are careless of human affairs, and have nothing to do in the events of the world. It is, therefore, high time to show them the contrary, for if they should succeed in bringing over the public to their side, you must soon accommodate yourselves to a meager diet. Who will be inclined to sacrifice if he has nothing to expect of you? What heavy complaints are brought against them by Luna you have heard from our guest that came yesterday. Consult, therefore, and take such order as best may tend to the benefit of mankind and to the safety of ourselves."

Jupiter had no sooner ended his speech when the whole assembly, with one voice, cried out:

"Blast them! Burn them! Exterminate them! Dash them to pieces! Hurl them down to Tartarus, as you did the giants!"

"Silence!" cried Jupiter. "Your will shall be done, ye

gods! They shall all be gored to death—by the horns of their own dilemmas! I must, however, defer the execution of the sentence; for you know we keep the holidays which last the four months next ensuing, and I have already proclaimed the vacation to the courts of judicature. They have, therefore, a respite for this winter. At the beginning of next spring my holy thunderstorm shall strike the caitiffs to the earth."—"*The Aerial Journey of Menippus.*"

The Greek Anthology

(These fifteen selections are attributable to the following authors: The first six to Lucian, Crates, Julian, Agathias, Nearchus, Ammianus, in the order named; the next five to Lucilius; the last four to anonymous writers.)

Darkness

A blockhead bit by fleas put out the light,
And, chuckling, cried, "Now you can't see to bite!"

Cures for Love

Hunger, perhaps, may cure your love,
  Or time your passion greatly alter;
If both should unsuccessful prove,
  I strongly recommend a halter.

Beer

What! whence this, Bacchus? For, by Bacchus' self,
The son of Jove, I know not this strange elf.
The other smells like nectar; but thou here
Like the he-goat. Those wretched Celts, I fear,

For want of grapes, made thee of ears of corn.
Demetrius art thou, of Demeter born,
Not Bacchus, Dionysus, nor yet wine—
Those names but fit the products of the vine;
Beer thou mayst be from barley; or, that failing,
We'll call thee ale, for thou wilt keep us ailing.

Grammar and Medicine

A thriving doctor sent his son to school
To gain some knowledge, should he prove no fool;
But took him soon away with little warning,
On finding out the lesson he was learning—
How great Pelides's wrath, in Homer's rime,
Sent many souls to Hades ere their time.
"No need for this my boy should hither come;
That lesson he can better learn at home;
For I myself, now, I make bold to say,
Sent many souls to Hades ere their day,
Nor e'er found want of grammar stop my way."

A Singer

Men die when the night-raven sings or cries;
But when Dick sings, e'en the night-raven dies.

An Epitaph

Light lie the earth, Nearchus, on thy clay,
That so the dogs may easier find their prey.

Envy

Poor Diophon of envy died,
His brother thief to see
Nailed next to him and crucified
Upon a higher tree.

A Professor with a Small Class

Hail, Aristides, rhetoric's great professor!
Of wondrous words we own thee the possessor.
Hail ye, his pupils seven, that mutely hear him—
His room's four walls, and the three benches near him.

False Charms

Chloe, those locks of raven hair,
Some people say you dye with black;
But that's a libel, I can swear,
For I know where you buy them black.

A Schoolmaster with a Gay Wife

You in your school forever flog and flay us,
Teaching what Paris did to Menelaus;
But all the while, within your private dwelling,
There's many a Paris courting of your Helen.

Board or Lodging

Asclepiades, the miser, in his house
Espied one day, to his surprise, a mouse.
"Tell me, dear mouse," he cried, "to what cause is it
I owe this pleasant but unlooked-for visit?"
The mouse said, smiling, "Fear not for your hoard;
I come, my friend, to lodge, and not to board."

Convenient Partnership

Damon, who plied the undertaker's trade,
With Doctor Crateas an agreement made.
What linens Damon from the dead could seize,
He to the doctor sent for bandages;
While the good doctor, here no promise-breaker,
Sent all his patients to the undertaker.

Long and Short

Dick cannot blow his nose whene'er he pleases,
His nose so long is, and his arm so short;
Nor ever cries, "God bless me!" when he sneezes—
He cannot hear so distant a report.

The Lerneans

Lerneans are bad: not *some* bad and *some not,*
But all; there's not a Lernean in the lot,
Save Procles, that you could a good man call.
But Procles—is a Lernean, after all.

Perplexity

Sad Heraclitus, with thy tears return;
Life more than ever gives us cause to mourn.
Democritus, dear droll, revisit earth;
Life more than ever gives us cause for mirth.
Between you both I stand in thoughtful pother,
How I should weep with one, how laugh with t'other.

Roman Wit and Humor

Plautus

Military Swagger

PYRGOPOLINICES, ARTOTROGUS, *and* SOLDIERS.

Pyrg. Take care that the luster of my shield is more bright than the rays of the sun when the sky is clear, that, when occasion comes, the battle being joined, 'mid the fierce ranks right opposite it may dazzle the eyesight of the enemy. But I must console this saber of mine, that it may not lament nor be downcast in spirits, because I have thus long been wearing it keeping holiday, though it so dreadfully longs to make havoc of the enemy. But where is Artotrogus?

Arto. Here he is; he stands close by the hero, valiant and successful, and of princely form. Mars could not dare to style himself so great a warrior, nor compare his prowess with yours.

Pyrg. Him you mean whom I spared on the Gorgonidonian plains, where Bumbomachides Clytomestoridysarchides, the grandson of Neptune, was the chief commander?

Arto. I remember him; him, I suppose you mean, with the golden armor, whose legions you puffed away with your breath, just as the wind blows away leaves or the reed-thatched roof.

Pyrg. That, by my troth, was really nothing at all.

Arto. Faith, that really was nothing at all in comparison with other things I could mention (*aside*) which you never did. If any person ever beheld a more perjured fel-

low than this, or one more full of vain boasting, let him have me for himself: I'll become his slave.

Pyrg. What are you saying?

Arto. Why, that I remember in what fashion you broke the foreleg of an elephant, in India, with your fist.

Pyrg. How—the foreleg?

Arto. I meant to say the thigh.

Pyrg. I struck the blow without an effort.

Arto. Troth, if, indeed, you had put forth your strength, your arm would have passed right through the hide, the entrails, and the frontispiece of the elephant.

Pyrg. I don't care to talk about these things just now.

Arto. I' faith, 'tis really not worth while for you to tell me of it, who know your prowess well. (*Aside.*) My appetite creates all these tales. I must hear him right out with my ears, that my teeth mayn't have time to grow, and whatever lie he shall tell I must agree to it.

Pyrg. What was it I was saying?

Arto. Oh, I know what you were going to say just now. I' faith 'twas bravely done; I remember its being done.

Pyrg. What was that?

Arto. Whatever it was you were going to say.

Pyrg. Have you got your tablets?

Arto. Are you intending to enlist some one? I have them, and a pen as well.

Pyrg. How quickly you guess my thoughts!

Arto. 'Tis fit that I should study your inclinations, so that whatever you wish should first occur to me.

Pyrg. What do you remember?

Arto. I do remember this: In Cilicia there were a hundred and fifty men, a hundred in Cryphiolathronia, thirty at

Sardis, sixty men of Macedon, whom you slaughtered altogether in one day.

Pyrg. What is the sum total of those men?

Arto. Seven thousand.

Pyrg. It must be as much; you keep the reckoning well.

Arto. Yet I have none of them written down; still, I remember it was so.

Pyrg. By my troth, you have a right good memory.

Arto. (*aside*). 'Tis the flesh-pots give it a fillip.

Pyrg. So long as you shall do as you have done hitherto, you shall always have something to eat; I will always make you a partaker at my table.

Arto. Besides, in Cappadocia you would have killed five hundred men altogether at one blow, had not your saber been blunt.

Pyrg. I let them live, because I was quite sick of fighting.

Arto. Why should I tell you what all mortals know, that you, Pyrgopolinices, live upon the earth with your valor, beauty, and achievements unsurpassed? All the women are in love with you, and that not without reason, since you are so handsome. Witness those girls that pulled me by my mantle yesterday.

Pyrg. What was it they said to you?

Arto. They questioned me about you. "Is Achilles here?" says one to me. "No," says I, "his brother is." Then says the other to me, "By my troth, but he is a handsome and a noble man. See how his long hair becomes him! Certainly the women are lucky who share his favors."

Pyrg. And pray, did they really say so?

Arto. They both entreated me to bring you past to-day, so that they might see you.

Pyrg. 'Tis really a very great plague to a man to be too handsome!

Arto. They are quite a nuisance to me; they are praying, entreating, beseeching me to let them see you; sending for me for that purpose, so that I can't give my attention to your business.

Pyrg. It seems that it is time for us to go to the Forum, that I may count out their pay to those soldiers whom I lately enlisted; for King Seleucus entreated me with most earnest suit that I would raise and enlist recruits for him. To that business I have resolved to devote my attention this day.

Arto. Come, let's be going, then.

Pyrg. Guards, follow me.—"*The Braggart Captain.*"

The Suspicious Miser

MEGADORUS *and* EUNOMIA.

Eun. Tell me, pray, who is she whom you would like to take for a wife?

Meg. I'll tell you. Do you know that Euclio, the poor old man close by?

Eun. I know him; not a bad sort of man.

Meg. I'd like his maiden daughter to be promised me in marriage. Don't make any words about it, sister; I know what you are going to say—that she's poor. This poor girl pleases me.

Eun. May the gods prosper it!

Meg. I hope the same.

Eun. Do you wish me to stay for anything else?

Meg. No; farewell.

Eun. And to you the same, brother.

(*Goes into the house.*)

Meg. I'll go to see Euclio, if he's at home. But, ah! here comes the very man toward his own house!

Enter Euclio.

Euc. (*to himself*). I had a presentiment that I was going out to no purpose when I left my house, and therefore I went unwillingly; for neither did any one of the wardsmen come, nor yet the master of the ward, who ought to have distributed the money. Now I'm making all haste to hasten home; for, though I myself am here, my mind's at home.

Meg. May you be well, and ever fortunate, Euclio!

Euc. May the gods bless you, Megadorus!

Meg. How are you? Are you quite well and contented?

Euc. (*aside*). It isn't for nothing when a rich man accosts a poor man courteously. Now, this fellow knows that I've got some gold; for that reason he salutes me more courteously.

Meg. Do you say that you are well?

Euc. Oh, I'm not very well in the money line.

Meg. But if you've a contented mind, you have enough for passing a happy life with.

Euc. (*aside*). By my faith, the old woman has made a discovery to him about the gold; it is clear she has told him. I'll cut off her tongue, and tear out her eyes, when I get home.

Meg. Why are you talking to yourself?

Euc. I'm lamenting my poverty. I've a grown-up girl without a portion, and one that can't be disposed of in marriage; nor am I able to marry her to anybody.

Meg. Hold your peace; be of good courage, Euclio; she shall have a husband; you shall be assisted by myself. If you have need of help, command me.

Euc. (*aside*). Now he is aiming at my property, while he's making promises. He's gaping for my gold, that he may devour it; in the one hand he is carrying a stone, while he shows the bread in the other. I trust no person who, rich himself, is exceedingly courteous to a poor man; when he extends his hand with a kind air, then is he loading you with some damage. I know these polyps, who, when they've touched a thing, hold it fast.

Meg. Give me your attention, Euclio, for a little while; I wish to speak a few words to you about a common concern of yours and mine.

Euc. (*aside*). Alas! wo is me! My gold has been carried off from my house. Now he's wishing for this thing, I'm sure, to come to a compromise with me; but I'll look in my house first. (*He goes toward his door.*)

Meg. Where are you going?

Euc. I'll return to you directly, for there's something I must go and see to at home. (*Goes into his house.*)

Meg. I verily believe that when I make mention of his daughter, for him to promise her to me, he'll suppose that I am laughing at him; for I do not know of any man poorer than he.

EUCLIO *returns from his house.*

Euc. (*aside*). The gods favor me; my property's all safe. If nothing's lost, it's safe. I was dreadfully afraid before I went indoors. I was almost dead. (*Aloud.*) I'm come back to you, Megadorus, if you wish to say anything to me.

Meg. I thank you. I beg that as to what I shall inquire of you, you'll not hesitate to speak out boldly.

Euc. So long, indeed, as you inquire nothing that I mayn't choose to speak out upon.

Meg. Tell me, of what sort of family do you consider me to be sprung?

Euc. Of a good one.

Meg. What do you think about my character?

Euc. It's a good one.

Meg. What of my conduct?

Euc. Neither bad nor dishonest.

Meg. Do you know my age?

Euc. I know that you are as rich in years as in pocket.

Meg. I surely did always take you to be a citizen without evil guile, and now I am convinced.

Euc. (*aside*). He smells the gold. (*Aloud.*) What do you want with me now?

Meg. Since you know me, and I know you, what sort of person you are, may it bring a blessing on myself, and you, and your daughter, if I now ask your daughter as my wife. Promise me that it shall be so.

Euc. Heyday! Megadorus, you are doing a deed that's not becoming to your usual actions, in laughing at me, a poor man, and guiltless toward yourself and toward your family. For neither in act, nor in words, have I ever deserved it of you that you should do what you are doing now.

Meg. I vow that I neither came to laugh at you nor am I laughing at you, nor do I think you deserving of it.

Euc. Why, then, do you ask my daughter for yourself?

Meg. Because I believe that the match would be a good thing for all of us.

Euc. It suggests itself to my mind, Megadorus, that you

are a wealthy man, a man of rank, and that I am the poorest of the poor. Now, if I should give my daughter in marriage to you, it suggests itself to my mind that you are the ox, and that I am the ass; when I'm yoked to you, and when I'm not able to bear the burden equally with yourself, I, the ass, must lie down in the mire; you, the ox, would regard me no more than if I had never been born. I should then feel aggrieved, and my own class would laugh at me. In neither direction should I have a fixed stall, if there should be a divorce; the asses would tear me with their teeth, the oxen would butt at me with their horns. This is the great risk, in my passing over from the asses to the oxen.

Meg. The nearer you can unite yourself in alliance with honorable people the better. Do you receive this proposal, listen to me, and promise her to me.

Euc. But there is no marriage portion, I tell you.

Meg. You are to give none; so long as she comes with good principles, she is sufficiently portioned.

Euc. I say so for this reason, that you mayn't be supposing that I have found any treasures.

Meg. I know that; don't enlarge upon it. Promise her to me.

Euc. So be it. (*Starts and looks about.*) But, oh, Jupiter, am I not utterly undone?

Meg. What's the matter with you?

Euc. What was it sounded just now as though it were iron?

Meg. I ordered them to dig up the garden at my place. (Euclio *runs off into his house.*) But where has this man gone? He's off, and he hasn't fully answered me; he treats me with contempt. Because he sees that I wish for his friendship, he acts after the usual manner of mankind. For

if a wealthy person goes to ask a favor of a poorer one, the poor man is afraid to treat with him; through suspicion he hurts his own interest. The same person, when this opportunity is lost, afterward wishes for it too late.

Euc. (*coming out of the house, addressing servant within*). By the powers, if I don't give you up to have your tongue cut out by the roots, I order and I authorize you to hand me over to any one you please, to be mutilated.

Meg. By my troth, Euclio, I perceive that you consider me a fit man for you to make sport of in my old age, for no fault of my own.

Euc. I' faith, Megadorus, I am not doing so, nor should I desire it were I able to.

Meg. Well, then, do you betroth your daughter to me?

Euc. On those terms, and with that portion which I mentioned to you.

Meg. Do you promise her, then?

Euc. I do promise her.

Meg. May the gods bestow their blessings on it!

Euc. May the gods do so! Observe and remember that we've agreed, that my daughter is not to bring you any portion.

Meg. I remember it.

Euc. But I understand in what fashion people are wont to equivocate; an agreement is no agreement, no agreement is an agreement—just as it pleases you.

Meg. I'll have no misunderstanding with you. But what reason is there why we shouldn't have the nuptials this day?

Euc. Why, by my troth, there is very good reason why we should.

Meg. I'll go, then, and prepare matters. Do you want me for anything more?

Euc. All is settled. Farewell.

Meg. (*going to the door of his house and calling out*). Hullo! Strobilus, follow me quickly to the meat-market.

(*Exit* MEGADORUS.)

Euc. He has gone. Immortal gods, I do beseech you! How powerful is gold! I do believe, now, that he has had some intimation that I've got a treasure at home. He's gaping for that; for the sake of that has he persisted in this alliance!—"*The Pot of Gold.*"

Terence

Parasites and Gnathonites

Gnatho (*soliloquizing*). Immortal gods! how far does one man excel another! What a difference there is between a wise person and a fool! This came strongly into my mind from the following circumstance. As I was walking along to-day I met a certain individual of this place, of my own rank and station—no mean fellow—one who, like myself, had guttled away his paternal estate. I saw him, shabby, dirty, sickly, beset with rags and years. "What's the meaning of this garb?" said I. He answered, "Wretch that I am, I've lost what I possessed; see to what I am reduced; all my acquaintances and friends have forsaken me." On this I felt contempt for him as in comparison with myself. "What!" said I, "you pitiful sluggard, have you so managed matters as to have no hope left? Have you lost your wits together with your estate? Don't you see me, who have risen from the same condition? What a complexion I have, how spruce and well dressed, what portliness of person? I have everything, yet have nothing; and although I possess nothing, still I am in want of nothing." "But I," said he, "unhappily, can no longer find anybody who will feed me in exchange for making me the butt of his jokes." "What!" said I, "do you suppose it is managed by those means? You are quite mistaken. Once upon a time, in the early ages, there was a calling of that sort; but I will tell you a new mode of coney-catching; I, in fact, have been the first to strike into this path. There is a class of men

who strive to be the first in everything, but are not; to these I pay my court. I do not offer myself to them to be laughed at, but I am the first to laugh with them, and at the same time to admire their parts. Whatever they say, I commend; if they contradict that selfsame thing, I commend again. Does any one deny? I deny; does he affirm? I affirm. In fine, I have so trained myself as to humor them in everything. This calling is now by far the most productive." While we were thus talking, we arrived at the market-place. Overjoyed, all the confectioners ran at once to meet me; fishmongers, butchers, cooks, sausage-makers, fishermen, whom, both when my fortunes were flourishing and when they were ruined, I had served, and often serve still; they complimented me, asked me to dinner, and gave me a hearty welcome. When this poor hungry wretch saw that I was in such great esteem, and that I obtained a living so easily, then the fellow began to entreat me that I would allow him to learn this method of me. So I bade him become my follower —if he could. As the disciples of the philosophers take their names from the philosophers themselves, so, too, the Parasites ought to be called Gnathonites.—"*Eunuchus.*"

Catullus

The Roman Cockney

Stipends Anius even on opportunity *shtipends,*
Ambush as *hambush* still Anius used to declaim;
Then, hoped fondly the words were a marvel of articulation,
While with an *h* immense *hambush* arose from his heart.
So his mother of old, so e'en spoke Liber his uncle,
Credibly; so grandsire, grandam, alike did agree.

Syria took him away; all ears had rest for a moment;
Lightly the lips those words, slightly could utter again.
None was afraid any more of a sound so clumsy returning;
Sudden a solemn fright seized us: a message arrives.
"News from Sonia country; the sea, since Anius entered,
Changed; 'twas *Ionian* once, now 'twas *Hionian* all."

A Fixed Smile

Egnatius, spruce owner of superb white teeth,
Smiles sweetly, smiles forever. Is the bench in view,
Where stands the pleader just prepared to rouse our tears,
Egnatius smiles sweetly. Near the pyre they mourn,
Where weeps a mother o'er the lost, the kind, one son;
Egnatius smiles sweetly—what the time, or place,
Or thing soe'er, smiles sweetly. Such a rare complaint
Is his, not handsome, scarce to please the town, say I.

So take a warning for the nonce, my friend; town-bred
Were you, a Sabine hale, a pearly Tiburtine,
A frugal Umbrian body, Tuscan, huge of paunch,
A grim Samnian, black of hue, prodigious-tooth'd,
A Transpadane, my country not to pass untaxed—
In short, whoever cleanly cares to rinse foul teeth;
Yet sweetly smiling ever I would have you not:
For silly laughter, it's a silly thing indeed.

Horace

Obtrusive Company on the Sacred Way

Along the Sacred Road I strolled one day,
Deep in some bagatelle (you know my way),
When up comes one whose name I scarcely knew:
"Ah, dearest of dear fellows, how d'ye do?"
He grasped my hand: "Well, thanks; the same to you."
Then, as he still kept walking by my side,
To cut things short, "You've no commands?" I cried.
"Nay, you should know me; I'm a man of lore."
"Sir, I'm your humble servant all the more."
All in a fret to make him let me go,
I now walk fast, now loiter and walk slow,
Now whisper to my servant, while the sweat
Ran down so fast my very feet were wet.
"Oh, had I but a temper worth the name,
Like yours, Bolanus!" inly I exclaim,
While he keeps running on at a hand-trot
About the town, the streets, I know not what.
Finding I made no answer, "Ah, I see
You're at a strait to rid yourself of me;
But 'tis no use; I'm a tenacious friend,
And mean to hold you till your journey's end."
"No need to take you such a round; I go
To visit an acquaintance you don't know.
Poor man, he's ailing at his lodging, far
Beyond the bridge, where Cæsar's gardens are."

"Oh, never mind; I've nothing else to do,
And want a walk, so I'll step on with you."
Down go my ears in donkey-fashion, straight;
You've seen them do it, when their load's too great.
"If I mistake not," he begins, "you'll find
Viscus not more, nor Varius, to your mind;
There's not a man can turn a verse so soon,
Or dance so nimbly when he hears a tune;
While, as for singing—ah, my forte is there;
Tigellius' self might envy me, I'll swear."
He paused for breath. I falteringly strike in:
"Have you a mother? Have you kith or kin
To whom your life is precious?" "Not a soul;
My line's extinct; I have interred the whole."
Oh, happy they! (so into thought I fell)
After life's endless babble they sleep well.
My turn is next: despatch me, for the weird
Has come to pass which I so long have feared,
The fatal weird a Sabine beldame sung
All in my nursery days, when life was young:
"No sword nor poison e'er shall take him off,
Nor gout, nor pleurisy, nor racking cough;
A babbling tongue shall kill him; let him fly
All talkers, as he wishes not to die."
We got to Vesta's temple, and the sun
Told us a quarter of the day was done.
It chanced he had a suit, and was bound fast
Either to make appearance or be cast.
"Step here a moment, if you love me." "Nay,
I know no law; 'twould hurt my health to stay.
And then, my call." "I'm doubting what to do,
Whether to give my lawsuit up, or you."

"Me, pray!" "I will not." On he strides again.
I follow, unresisting, in his train.
"How stand you with Mæcenas?" he began;
"He picks his friends with care—a shrewd, wise man.
In fact, I take it, one could hardly name
A head so cool in life's exciting game.
'Twould be a good deed done, if you could throw
Your servant in his way; I mean, you know.
Just to play second. In a month, I'll swear,
You'd make an end of every rival there."
"Oh, you mistake; we don't live there in league;
I know no house more sacred from intrigue;
I'm never distanced in my friend's good grace
By wealth or talent; each man finds his place."
"A miracle! If 'twere not told by you,
I scarce should credit it." "And yet 'tis true."
"Ah, well, you double my desire to rise
To special favor with a man so wise."
"You've but to wish it; 'twill be your own fault,
If, with your nerve, you win not by assault.
He can be won; that puts him on his guard,
And so the first approach is always hard."
"No fear of me, sir. A judicious bribe
Will work a wonder with the menial tribe.
Say I'm refused admittance for to-day,
I'll watch my time; I'll meet him in the way,
Escort him, dog him. In this world of ours
The path to what we want ne'er runs on flowers."
'Mid all this prating met me, as it fell,
Aristius, my good friend, who knew him well.
We stop. Inquiries and replies go round:
"Where do you hail from?" "Whither are you bound?"

There as he stood, impassive like a clod,
I pull at his limp arms, frown, wink, and nod,
To urge him to release me. With a smile
He feigns stupidity. I burn with bile.
"Something there was you said you wished to tell
To me in private." "Aye, I mind it well;
But not just now. 'Tis a Jews' fast to-day:
Affront a sect so touchy? Nay, friend, nay!"
"Faith, I've no scruples." "Ah, but I've a few!
I'm weak, you know, and do as others do.
Some other time—excuse me." Wretched me,
That ever man so black a sun should see!
Off goes the rogue, and leaves me in despair,
Tied to the altar, with the knife in air,
When, by rare chance, the plaintiff in the suit
Knocks up against us: "Whither now, you brute?"
He roars like thunder. Then to me: "You'll stand
My witness, sir?" "My ear's at your command."
Off to the court he drags him; shouts succeed;
A mob collects—thank Phœbus, I am freed!

—"*Satires.*"

On Praise and Punishments

All singers have a fault: if asked to use
Their talent among friends, they never choose;
Unask'd, they ne'er leave off. Just such a one
Tigellius was, Sardinia's famous son.
Cæsar, who could have forced him to obey,
By his sire's friendship and his own might pray,

Yet not draw forth a note; then, if the whim
Took him, he'd troll a bacchanalian hymn
From top to bottom of the tetrachord,
Till the last course was set upon the board.
One mass of inconsistence, oft he'd fly
As if the foe were following in full cry,
While oft he'd stalk with a majestic gait,
Like Juno's priest in ceremonial state.
Now, he would keep two hundred serving-men,
And now, a bare establishment of ten.
Of kings and tetrarchs with an equal's air
He'd talk; next day he'd breathe the hermit's prayer:
"A table with three legs, a shell to hold
My salt, and clothes, though coarse, to keep out cold."
Yet give this man, so frugal, so content,
A thousand, in a week 'twould all be spent.
All night he would sit up, all day would snore;
So strange a jumble ne'er was seen before.
"Hold!" some one cries, "have you no failings?" Yes,
Failings enough, but different, maybe less.
One day when Mænius happened to attack
Novius the usurer behind his back,
"Do you not know yourself?" said one, "or think
That if you play the stranger, we shall wink?"
"Not know myself!" he answered; "you say true:
I do not; so I take a stranger's due."
Self-love like this is knavish and absurd,
And well deserves a damnatory word.
You glance at your own faults—your eyes are blear;
You eye your neighbor's—straightway you see clear,
Like hawk or basilisk; your neighbors pry
Into your frailties with as keen an eye.

A man is passionate, perhaps misplaced
In social circles of fastidious taste;
His ill-trimmed beard, his dress of uncouth style,
His shoes ill-fitting, may provoke a smile;
But he's the soul of virtue; but he's kind;
But that coarse body hides a mighty mind.
Now, having scanned his breast, inspect your own,
And see if there no failings have been sown
By Nature or by habit, as the fern
Springs in neglected fields, for men to burn.
True love, we know, is blind; defects that blight
The loved one's charms escape the lover's sight—
Nay, pass for beauties, as Balbinus glows
With admiration of his Hagna's nose.
Ah, if in friendship we e'en did the same,
And virtue cloaked the error with her name!
Come, let us learn how friends at friends should look,
By a leaf taken from a father's book.
Has the dear child a squint? at home he's classed
With Venus' self: "Her eyes have just that cast."
Is he a dwarf, like Sisyphus? His sire
Calls him "Sweet pet," and would not have him higher;
Gives Varus' name to knock-kneed boys, and dubs
His club-foot youngster, Scaurus, king of clubs.
E'en so let us our neighbors' frailties scan:
A friend is close—call him a careful man;
Another's vain, and fond of boasting—say
He talks in an engaging, friendly way;
A third is a barbarian, rude and free—
Straightforward and courageous let him be;
A fourth is apt to break into a flame—
An ardent spirit, make we that his name.

This is the sovereign recipe, be sure,
To win men's hearts, and, having won, secure.
  But *we* put virtue down to vice's score,
And foul the vessel that was clean before.
See, here's a modest man, who ranks too low
In his own judgment; him we nickname slow.
Another, ever on his guard, takes care
No enemy shall catch him unaware
(Small wonder, truly, in a world like this,
Beset with dogs that growl and snakes that hiss);
We turn his merit to a fault, and style
His prudence mere disguise, his caution guile.
Or take some honest soul, who, full of glee,
Breaks on a patron's solitude, like me,
Finds his Mæcenas book in hand or dumb,
And pokes him with remarks, the first that come;
We cry, "He lacks e'en common tact!" Alas!
What hasty laws against ourselves we pass!
For none is born without his faults; the best
But bears a lighter wallet than the rest.
A man of genial nature, as is fair,
My virtues with my vices will compare,
And, as with good or bad he fills the scale,
Lean to the better side, should that prevail.
So, when he seeks my friendship, I will trim
The wavering balance in my turn for him.
He that has fears his blotches may offend,
Speaks gently of the pimples of his friend;
For reciprocity exacts her dues,
And they that need excuse must needs excuse.
  Now, since resentment, spite of all we do,
Will haunt us fools, and other vices too,

Why should not reason use her own just sense,
And square her punishments to each offense?
Suppose a slave, as he removes the dish,
Licks the warm gravy or remains of fish,
Should his vexed master gibbet the poor lad,
He'd be a second Labeo, staring mad.
Now take another instance, and remark
A case of madness, grosser and more stark.
A friend has crossed you: 'tis a slight affair;
Not to forgive it writes you down a bear.
You hate the man, and his acquaintance fly,
As Ruso's debtors hide from Ruso's eye—
Poor victims, doomed, when that black pay-day's come,
Unless by hook or crook they raise the sum,
To stretch their necks, like captives to the knife,
And listen to dull histories for dear life.
Say, he has drunk too much, or smashed some ware,
Evander's once, inestimably rare,
Or stretched before me, in his zeal to dine,
To snatch a chicken I had meant for mine.
What then? Is that a reason he should seem
Less pleasant, less deserving my esteem?
How could I treat him worse, were he to thieve,
Betray a secret, or a trust deceive?
  Your men of words, who rate all crimes alike,
Collapse and founder when on fact they strike;
Sense, custom, all, cry out against the thing,
And high expedience, right's perennial spring.
When men first crept from out earth's womb, like worms,
Dumb, speechless creatures, with scarce human forms,
With nails or doubled fists they used to fight
For acorns or for sleeping-holes at night;

Clubs followed next; at last to arms they came,
Which growing practise taught them how to frame,
Till words and names were found wherewith to mold
The sounds they uttered, and their thoughts unfold.
Thenceforth they left off fighting, and began
To build them cities, guarding man from man,
And set up laws as barriers against strife
That threatened person, property, or wife.
'Twas fear of wrong gave birth to right, you'll find,
If you but search the records of mankind.
Nature knows good and evil, joy and grief,
But just and unjust are beyond her brief.
Nor can philosophy, though finely spun,
By stress of logic prove the two things one,
To strip your neighbor's garden of a flower,
And rob a shrine at midnight's solemn hour.
A rule is needed to apportion pain,
Nor let you scourge, when you should only cane.
For that you're likely to be overmild,
And treat a ruffian like a naughty child,
Of this there seems small danger, when you say
That theft's as bad as robbery in its way,
And vow all villains, great and small, shall swing
From the same tree, if men will make you king.
  But tell me, Stoic, if the wise, you teach,
Is king, Adonis, cobbler, all and each,
Why wish for what you've got? "You fail to see
What great Chrysippus means by that," says he.
"What though the wise ne'er shoe nor slipper made,
The wise is still a brother of the trade;
Just as Hermogenes, when silent, still
Remains a singer of consummate skill;

As sly Alfenius, when he had let drop
His implements of art and shut up shop,
Was still a barber, so the wise is best
In every craft, a king's among the rest."
Hail to your Majesty! Yet, ne'ertheless,
Rude boys are pulling at your beard, I guess;
And now, unless your cudgel keeps them off,
The mob begins to hustle, push, and scoff;
You, all forlorn, attempt to stand at bay,
And roar till your imperial lungs give way.
Well, so we part; each takes his separate path.
You make your progress to your farthing bath,
A king, with ne'er a follower in your train,
Except Crispinus, that distempered brain;
While I find pleasant friends to screen me, when
I chance to err, like other foolish men;
Bearing and borne with, so the change we ring,
More blest as private folks than you as king.

—"*Satires.*"

Town Mouse and Country Mouse

This used to be my wish: a bit of land,
A house and garden with a spring at hand,
And just a little wood. The gods have crowned
My humble vows; I prosper and abound.
Nor ask I more, kind Mercury, save that thou
Wouldst give me still the goods thou giv'st me now;
If crime has ne'er increased them, nor excess
And want of thrift are like to make them less;

If I ne'er pray like this, "Oh, might that nook
Which spoils my field be mine by hook or crook!
Oh, for a stroke of luck like his, who found
A crock of silver, turning up the ground,
And, thanks to good Alcides, farmed as buyer
The very land where he had slaved for hire!"
If what I have contents me, hear my prayer;
Still let me feel thy tutelary care,
And let my sheep, my pastures, this and that,
My all, in fact (except my brains), be fat.
Now, lodged in my hill-castle, can I choose
Companion fitter than my homely muse?
Here no town duties vex, no plague-winds blow,
Nor autumn, friend to graveyards, works me wo.
Sire of the morning (do I call thee right,
Or hear'st thou Janus' name with more delight?)
Who introducest, so the gods ordain,
Life's various tasks, inaugurate my strain.
At Rome to bail I'm summoned. "Do your part,"
Thou bidd'st me; "quick, lest others get the start."
So, whether Boreas roars, or winter's snow
Clips short the day, to court I needs must go.
I give the fatal pledge, distinct and loud,
Then, pushing, struggling, battle with the crowd.
"Now, madman!" clamors some one, not without
A threat or two, "just mind what you're about!
What! you must knock down all that's in your way,
Because you're posting to Mæcenas, eh?"
This pleases me, I own; but when I get
To black Esquiliæ, trouble waits me yet;
For other people's matters in a swarm
Buzz round my head, and take my ears by storm:

"Sir, Roscius would be glad if you'd arrange
By eight A.M. to be with him on 'Change."
"Quintus, the scribes entreat you to attend
A meeting of importance, as their friend."
"Just get Mæcenas' seal attached to these."
"I'll try." "Oh, you can do it, if you please."
Seven years, or rather eight, have well-nigh passed
Since with Mæcenas' friends I first was classed,
To this extent, that, driving through the street,
He'd stop his car and offer me a seat,
Or make such chance remarks as "What's o'clock?"
"Will Syria's champion beat the Thracian cock?"
"These morning frosts are apt to be severe"—
Just chit-chat, suited to a leaky ear.
Since that auspicious date, each day and hour
Has placed me more and more in envy's power:
"He joined his play, sat next him at the games;
A child of Fortune!" all the world exclaims.
From the high *rostra* a report comes down,
And like a chilly fog, pervades the town:
Each man I meet accosts me, "Is it so?
You live so near the gods, you're sure to know
The news about the Dacians. Have you heard
No secret tidings?" "Not a single word."
"Oh, yes, you love to banter us poor folk!"
"Nay, if I've heard a tittle, may I choke!"
"Will Cæsar grant his veterans their estates
In Italy, or t'other side the straits?"
I swear that I know nothing, and am dumb.
They think me deep, miraculously mum.
And so my day between my fingers slips,
While fond regrets keep rising to my lips.

Oh, my dear homestead in the country! when
Shall I behold your pleasant face again,
And, studying now, now dozing and at ease,
Imbibe forgetfulness of all this tease?
Oh, when, Pythagoras, shall thy brother bean,
With pork and cabbage, on my board be seen?
Oh, happy nights and suppers half divine,
When, at the home-gods' altar, I and mine
Enjoy a frugal meal, and leave the treat
Unfinished for my merry slaves to eat!
Not bound by madcap rules, but free to choose
Big cups or small, each follows his own views.
You toss your wine off boldly, if you please,
Or gently sip, and mellow by degrees.
We talk not of our neighbor's house or field,
Nor the last feat of Lepos, the light-heeled,
But matters which to know concerns us more,
Which none but at his peril can ignore;
Whether 'tis wealth or virtue makes men blest,
What leads to friendship, worth or interest,
In what the good consists, and what the end
And chief of goods, on which the rest depend;
While neighbor Cervius, with his rustic wit,
Tells old wives' tales, this case or that to hit.
Should some one be unwise enough to praise
Arellius' toilsome wealth, he straightway says:
"One day a country mouse in his poor home
Received an ancient friend, a mouse from Rome.
The host, though close and careful, to a guest
Could open still; so now he did his best.
He spares not oats or vetches; in his chaps
Raisins he brings, and nibbled bacon-scraps,

Hoping by varied dainties to entice
His town-bred guest, so delicate and nice,
Who condescended graciously to touch
Thing after thing, but never would take much,
While he, the owner of the mansion, sate
On threshed-out straw, and spelt and darnels ate.
At length the town mouse cries, 'I wonder how
You can live here, friend, on this hill's rough brow!
Take my advice, and leave these ups and downs,
This hill and dale, for humankind and towns.
Come, now, go home with me; remember, all
Who live on earth are mortal, great and small.
Then take, good sir, your pleasure while you may;
With life so short, 'twere wrong to lose a day.'
This reasoning made the rustic's head turn round;
Forth from his hole he issues with a bound,
And they two make together for their mark,
In hopes to reach the city during dark.
The midnight sky was bending over all,
When they set foot within a stately hall,
Where couches of wrought ivory had been spread
With gorgeous coverlets of Tyrian red,
And viands piled up high in baskets lay,
The relics of a feast of yesterday.
The town mouse does the honors, lays his guest
At ease upon a couch with crimson dressed,
Then nimbly moves in character of host,
And offers in succession boiled and roast;
Nay, like a well-trained slave, each wish prevents,
And tastes before the titbits he presents.
The guest, rejoicing in his altered fare,
Assumes in turn a genial diner's air,

When, hark, a sudden banging of the door!
Each from his couch is tumbled on the floor.
Half dead, they scurry round the room, poor things,
While the whole house with barking mastiffs rings.
Then says the rustic, 'It may do for you,
This life, but I don't like it; so, adieu.
Give me my hole, secure from all alarms;
I'll prove that tares and vetches still have charms.'"

—"*Satires.*"

The Poet Appreciated

As puffing auctioneers collect a throng,
Rich poets bribe false friends to hear their song.
Who can resist the lord of so much rent,
Of so much money at so much per cent?
Is there a wight can give a grand regale,
Act as a poor man's counsel or his bail?
Blest though he be, his wealth will cloud his view,
Nor suffer him to know false friends from true.
Don't ask a man whose feelings overflow
For kindness that you've shown or mean to show,
To listen to your verse; each line you read,
He'll cry, "Good! Bravo! Exquisite indeed!"
He'll change his color, let his eyes run o'er
With tears of joy, dance, beat upon the floor.
Hired mourners at a funeral say and do
A little more than they whose grief is true.
'Tis just so here: false flattery displays
More show of sympathy than honest praise.

'Tis said, when kings a would-be friend will try,
With wine they rack him and with bumpers ply.
If you write poems, look beyond the skin
Of the smooth fox, and search the heart within.
Read verses to Quintilius; he would say,
"I don't like this and that; improve it, pray;"
Tell him you found it hopeless to correct;
You'd tried it twice or thrice without effect;
He'd calmly bid you make the three times four,
And take the unlicked cub in hand once more.
But if you chose to vindicate the crime,
Not mend it, he would waste no further time,
But let you live untroubled by advice,
Sole tenant of your own fool's paradise.
A wise and faithful counselor will blame
Weak verses, note the rough, condemn the lame,
Retrench luxuriance, make obscureness plain,
Cross-question this, bid that be writ again.
A second Aristarch, he will not ask,
"Why for such trifles take my friend to task?"
Such trifles bring to serious grief ere long
A hapless bard, once flattered and led wrong.
See the mad poet! Never wight, though sick
Of itch or jaundice, moonstruck, fanatic,
Was half so dangerous; men whose mind is sound
Avoid him; fools pursue him, children hound.
Suppose, while spluttering verses, head on high,
Like fowler watching blackbirds in the sky,
He falls into a pit; though loud he shout
"Help, neighbors, help!" let no man pull him out.
Should some one seem disposed a rope to fling,
I will strike in with, "Pray do no such thing;

I'll warrant you he meant it," and relate
His brother bard Empedocles's fate,
Who, wishing to be thought a god, poor fool,
Leapt down hot Ætna's crater, calm and cool.
"Leave poets free to perish as they will;
Save them by violence, you as good as kill.
'Tis not his first attempt; if saved to-day,
He's sure to die in some outrageous way.
Besides, none knows the reason why this curse
Was sent on him, this love of making verse,
By what offense Heaven's anger he incurred,
A grave defiled, a sacred boundary stirred.
So much is plain, he's mad. Like bear that beats
His prison down and ranges through the streets,
This terrible reciter puts to flight
The learned and unlearned, left and right.
Let him catch one, he keeps him till he kills,
As leeches stick till they have sucked their fills."

—"*The Art of Poetry.*"

Blessings of Wisdom and Wealth

Theme of my earliest Muse in days long past,
Theme that shall be hereafter of my last,
Why summon back, Mæcenas, to the list
Your worn-out swordsman, pensioned and dismissed?
My age, my mind, no longer are the same
As when I first was 'prenticed to the game.
Veianius fastens to Alcides' gate
His arms, then nestles in his snug estate.

Think you once more upon the arena's marge
He'd care to stand and supplicate discharge?
No, I've a mentor who, not once nor twice,
Breathes in my well-rinsed ear his sound advice:
"Give rest in time to that old horse, for fear
At last he founder 'mid the general jeer."
So now I bid my idle songs adieu,
And turn my thoughts to what is right and true;
I search and search, and, when I find, I lay
The wisdom up against a rainy day.
But what's my sect? you ask me; I must be
A member, sure, of some fraternity!
Why, no; I've taken no man's shilling; none
Of all your fathers owns me for his son.
Just where the weather drives me, I invite
Myself to take up quarters for the night.
Now, all alert, I cope with life's rough main,
A loyal follower in true virtue's train;
Anon, to Aristippus' camp I flit,
And say, the world's for me, not I for it.
Long as the night to him whose love is gone,
Long as the day to slaves that must work on,
Slow as the year to the impatient ward
Who finds a mother's tutelage too hard,
So long, so slow, the moments that prevent
The execution of my high intent,
Of studying truths that rich and poor concern,
Which young and old are lost unless they learn.
Well, if I cannot be a student, yet
There's good in spelling at the alphabet.
Your eyes will never see like Lynceus'; still
You rub them with an ointment when they're ill.

You cannot hope for Glyco's stalwart frame;
Yet you'd avoid the gout that makes you lame.
Some point of moral progress each may gain,
Though to aspire beyond it should prove vain.
  Say, is your bosom fevered with the fire
Of sordid avarice or unchecked desire?
Know, there are spells will help you to allay
The pain, and put good part of it away.
You're bloated by ambition? Take advice:
Yon book will ease you if you read it thrice.
Run through the list of faults; whate'er you be,
Coward, pickthank, spitfire, drunkard, debauchee,
Submit to culture patiently; you'll find
Her charms can humanize the rudest mind.
  To fly from vice is virtue; to be free
From foolishness is wisdom's first degree.
Think of some ill you feel a real disgrace,
The loss of money or the loss of place;
To keep yourself from these, how keen the strain!
How dire the sweat of body and of brain!
Through tropic heat, o'er rocks and seas you run
To farthest India, poverty to shun,
Yet scorn the sage who offers you release
From vagrant wishes that disturb your peace.
Take some provincial pugilist, who gains
A paltry cross-way prize for all his pains;
Place on his brow Olympia's chaplet; earned
Without a struggle, would the gift be spurned?
  Gold counts for more than silver, all men hold;
Why doubt that virtue counts for more than gold?
"Seek money first, good friends, and virtue next,"
Each Janus lectures on the well-worn text."

Lads learn it for their lessons; gray-haired men,
Like schoolboys, drawl the singsong o'er again.
You lack, say, some six thousand of the rate
The law has settled as a knight's estate;
Though soul, tongue, morals, credit, all the while
Are yours, you reckon with the rank and file.
But mark those children at their play; they sing:
"Deal fairly, youngster, and we'll crown you king."
Be this your wall of brass, your coat of mail,
A guileless heart, a cheek no crime turns pale.
Which is the better teacher, tell me, pray,
The law of Roscius, or the children's lay
That crowns fair dealing, by Camillus trolled,
And manly Curius, in the days of old;
The voice that says, "Make money, money, man;
Well, if so be; if not, which way you can,"
That from a nearer distance you may gaze
At honest Pupius' all too moving plays;
Or that which bids you meet with dauntless brow
The frowns of Fortune, ay, and shows you how?
Suppose the world of Rome accosts me thus:
"You walk where we walk; why not think with us,
Be ours for better or for worse, pursue
The things we love, the things we hate eschew?"
I answer, as sly Reynard answered when
The ailing lion asked him to his den:
"I'm frightened at those footsteps; every track
Leads to your home, but ne'er a one leads back."
Nay, you're a perfect Hydra; who shall choose
Which view to follow out of all your views?
Some farm the taxes; some delight to see
Their money grow by usury, like a tree;

Some bait a widow-trap with fruits and cakes,
And net old men, to stock their private lakes.
But grant that folks have different hobbies; say,
Does one man ride one hobby one whole day?
"Baiæ's the place!" cries Crœsus. All is haste;
The lake, the sea, soon feel their master's taste.
A new whim prompts; 'tis, "Pack your tools to-night!
Off for Teanum with the dawn of light!"
The nuptial bed is in his hall; he swears
None but a single life is free from cares.
Is he a bachelor? All human bliss,
He vows, is centered in a wedded kiss!
How shall I hold this Proteus in my gripe?
How fix him down in one enduring type?
Turn to the poor: their megrims are as strange;
Bath, cockloft, barber, eating-house, they change;
They hire a boat; your born aristocrat
Is not more squeamish, tossing in his yacht.
If, when we meet, I'm cropped in awkward style
By some uneven barber, then you smile;
You smile if, as it haps, my gown's askew;
If my shirt's ragged while my tunic's new.
How, if my mind's inconsequent, rejects
What late it longed for, what it loathed affects,
Shifts every moment, with itself at strife,
And makes a chaos of an ordered life,
Builds castles up, then pulls them to the ground,
Keeps changing round for square, and square for round?
You smile not; 'tis an every-day affair;
I need no doctor's, no, nor keeper's care.
Yet you're my patron, and would blush to fail
In taking notice of an ill-pared nail.

So, to sum up: the sage is half divine,
Rich, free, great, handsome, king of kings; in fine,
A miracle of health from toe to crown,
Mind, heart, and head, save when his nose runs down.

—"*Epistles.*"

Petronius

An Ingenious Cook

We little thought, as the saying is, that after so many dainties we had another hill to climb; for the table being uncovered to a flourish of music, three muzzled white hogs were brought in, with bells hanging on their necks. The man leading them said one was two years old, the other three, and the last full grown. For my part, I took them for acrobats, and imagined the hogs were to perform some of the surprising feats practised at the circus. But Trimalchio broke in upon our expectation by asking us, "Which of these will you have dressed for supper? Cocks and pheasants are country fare, but my cooks have pans in which a calf can be roasted whole." And immediately commanding a cook to be called, Trimalchio, without waiting for our choice, bade him kill the largest. He then inquired of the cook how he came by him, saying, "Were you bought, or were you born in my house?" "Neither," replied the cook, "but left you by Pansa's testament." "Then see to it," answered Trimalchio, "that this beast is prepared quickly, or I shall make you serve my footmen." . . .

While our host was talking on, an overgrown hog was brought to table. We all wondered at the expedition which had been used, swearing a capon could not have been dressed in that time; and what increased our surprise was that this hog seemed larger than the boar which had been set before us. Trimalchio, after gazing steadfastly upon him, exclaimed, "What! have his entrails not been taken out?

No, by Hercules, they have not! Bring in that rogue of a cook!" The cook, being dragged in before us, hung his head, excusing himself that he had forgotten. "Forgotten!" roared his master. "Strip the rascal! Strip him!" The poor man was stripped forthwith, and placed between two tormentors. We all interceded for him, alleging that such an error might occasionally happen, and therefore desired his pardon, protesting we would never speak for him if he repeated the same offense.

I thought he richly deserved his fate, and could not forbear whispering to Agamemnon, "This must certainly be a most careless rascal. How could any one forget to disembowel a hog? I would not have forgiven him, by Hercules, had he thus served up a dish for me!" Our host, resuming a pleasant look, said, "Come, now, you with the short memory, let us see if you can disembowel the animal before us." Upon which the cook, having put his garments on again, took his knife, and with a trembling hand slashed the hog on both sides of the belly, when out tumbled a load of hog's-puddings and sausages. . . .

The dessert consisted of a blackbird pie, dried grapes, and candied nuts. There were also quinces, stuck so full of spices that they looked like so many hedgehogs. Yet all this might have been endured, had not the next dish been so monstrous and disgusting that we would rather have perished of hunger than touched it; for, it being placed upon the table, and, as we imagined, a good fat goose, with fish and all kinds of fowl round it, Trimalchio cried, "Whatever you see here is all made out of one body!" I, being a cunning spark, took a guess at what it might really be, and, turning to Agamemnon, "I wonder," said I, "whether all this is not made of loam? I once remember seeing such

an imaginary dish in the Saturnalia at Rome." Scarce had I ended, when Trimalchio began to praise his cook:

"There is no cleverer fellow in the world. Out of the belly he'll make you a dish of fish; a plover out of a piece of fat bacon; a turtle out of leg of pork; and a hen out of the intestines. And therefore, in my opinion, he has a very suitable name, for we call him Dædalus. Because he is such an ingenious fellow, a friend of his brought him a present of knives from Rome, of German steel; and immediately he called for them, and, turning them over, gave us the liberty to try the edges on his cheeks."

Just then in rushed two servants in high dispute, as if they were quarreling about a yoke, from which hung two earthen jars. And when Trimalchio had judged between them, neither of them stood to the sentence, but each fell to club law, and broke the other's jar. Amazed at the insolence of these drunken rascals, all our eyes were fixed on their conflict, when we perceived oysters and other shell-fish to fall from the broken jars, a boy collecting them in a charger and handing them about among the guests.

Nor was the cook's ingenuity in the least unworthy of this extraordinary magnificence; for he brought us snails upon a silver gridiron, and with a shrill, unpleasant voice sang us a song. . . . We were almost pushed off our couches by the crowd of servants who rushed into the hall; and who should be seated above me but the ingenious cook, that had made a goose from a piece of pork, all reeking of pickles and kitchen slops. Not content with being seated at table, he began to act Thespis the Tragedian; and soon after he challenged his master to contend with him for the laurel wreath at the next chariot-races.

—*"Trimalchio's Banquet."*

Persius

Poetic Fame

Immured within our studies, we compose;
Some, shackled meter; some, freefooted prose;
But all, bombast—stuff, which the breast may strain,
And the huge lungs puff forth with awkward pain.
'Tis done! And now the bard, elate and proud,
Prepares a grand rehearsal for the crowd.
Lo! he steps forth in birthday splendor bright,
Combed and perfumed, and robed in dazzling white,
And mounts the desk; his pliant throat he clears,
And deals, insidious, round his wanton leers;
While Rome's first nobles, by the prelude wrought,
Watch, with indecent glee, each prurient thought,
And squeal with rapture, as the luscious line
Thrills through the marrow and inflames the chine.
Vile dotard! Canst thou thus consent to please,
To pander for such itching fools as these?
Fools, whose applause must shoot beyond thy aim,
And tinge thy cheek, bronzed as it is, with shame!
But wherefore have I learned, if, thus represt,
The leaven still must swell within my breast;
If the wild fig-tree, deeply rooted there,
Must never burst its bounds and shoot in air?
Are these the fruits of study, these of age?
Oh, times, oh, manners! Thou misjudging sage,
Is science only useful as 'tis shown,
And is thy knowledge nothing if not known?

But, sure, 'tis pleasant, as we walk, to see
The pointed finger, hear the loud "That's he!"
On every side. And seems it, in your sight,
So poor a trifle, that whate'er we write
Is introduced to every school of note,
And taught the youth of quality by rote?
Nay, more! Our nobles, gorged, and swilled with wine,
Call, o'er the banquet, for a lay divine.
Here one, on whom the princely purple glows,
Snuffles some musty legend through his nose,
Slowly distils Hypsipyle's sad fate,
And love-lorn Phyllis dying for her mate,
With what of woful else is said or sung,
And trips up every word with lisping tongue.
The maudlin audience, from the couches round,
Hum their assent, responsive to the sound.
And are not now the poet's ashes blest?
Now lies the turf not lightly on his breast?
They pause a moment, and again the room
Rings with his praise. Now will not roses bloom,
Now, from his relics, will not violets spring,
And o'er his hallowed urn their fragrance fling?
You laugh ('tis answered), and too freely here
Indulge that vile propensity to sneer.
Lives there, who would not at applause rejoice,
And merit, if he could, the public voice?
Who would not leave posterity such rimes,
As cedar oil might keep to latest times—
Rimes which should fear no desperate grocer's hand,
Nor fly with fish and spices through the land?
Thou, my kind monitor, whoe'er thou art,
Whom I suppose to play the opponent's part,

Know, when I write, if chance some happier strain
(And chance it needs must be) rewards my pain,
Know, I can relish praise with genuine zest;
Not mine the torpid, mine the unfeeling breast.
But that I merely toil for this acclaim,
And make these eulogies my end and aim,
I must not, cannot grant. For—sift them all,
Mark well their value, and on what they fall—
Are they not showered (to pass these trifles o'er)
On Labeo's Iliad, drunk with hellebore,
On princely love-lays driveled without thought,
And the crude trash on citron couches wrought?
You spread the table, 'tis a master-stroke,
And give the shivering guest a threadbare cloak;
Then, while his heart with gratitude dilates
At the glad vest and the delicious cates,
"Tell me," you cry, "for truth is my delight,
What says the town of me, and what I write?"
He cannot; he has neither ears nor eyes.
But shall I tell you who your bribes despise?
Bald trifler! cease at once your thriftless trade;
That mountain paunch for verse was never made.

—*"Satires."*

Martial

Epigrams

I LOVE thee not, Sabidius. But why?
I love thee not—that's all I can reply.

Why, Paulus, would you have me write
On Phyllis, to provoke her spite?
The reason is, as you must own,
You want her for yourself alone.

You've a wife, friend Fabullus, chaste, beautiful, young;
  And the blessing of numerous progeny ask.
What you crave of the gods, with suppliant tongue,
  Is your own to perform—virility's task.

Œlia had four teeth—I think I'm right;
  One cough ejected two, another two.
Now she may cough forever, day and night;
  There's nothing left for the next cough to do.

The verses, friend, which thou hast read, are mine;
But, as thou read'st them, they may pass for thine.

As your legs mock the horns of a moon incomplete,
In a funnel, friend Phœbus, you might wash your feet.

Eutrapelus, the barber, works so slow,
That, while he shaves, the beard anew does grow.

I have no farthing, Regulus, at home—
Unless your gifts I sell. Will you buy some?

Jack's father's dead, and left him without hope,
For he has left him nothing but a rope;
By a strange turn does fortune thus contrive
To make Jack wish his father were alive!

Bought verses as your own you may recite,
For what you buy is surely yours by right.

Zoilus, he lied who called thee vicious elf;
Thou art not vicious, but art vice itself.

Ten pounds you begged to borrow t'other day,
Which speedily you promised to repay.
I had it not, as civ'ly I did say.
But you, by a friend's visit then surprised,
To borrow of me silver plate devised!
Are you a fool, or I, do you suppose,
That, 'stead of ten pounds, fifty I would lose?

Juvenal

Cosmetic Disguise

A WOMAN stops at nothing when she wears
Rich emeralds round her neck, and in her ears
Pearls of enormous size; these justify
Her faults, and make all lawful in her eye.
Sure, of all ills with which mankind are cursed,
A wife who brings you money is the worst.
Behold! her face a spectacle appears,
Bloated, and foul, and plastered to the ears
With viscous paste. The husband looks askew,
And sticks his lips in this detested glue.
She meets the adulterer bathed, perfumed, and dressed,
But rots in filth at home, a very pest!
For him she breathes of nard; for him alone
She makes the sweets of Araby her own;
For him, at length, she ventures to uncase,
Scales the first layer of roughcast from her face,
And, while the maids to know her now begin,
Clears, with that precious milk, her muddy skin,
For which, though exiled to the frozen main,
She'd lead a drove of asses in her train!
But tell me now: this thing, thus daubed and oiled,
Thus poulticed, plastered, baked by turns and boiled,
Thus with pomatums, ointments, lacquered o'er—
Is it a face, pray tell me, or a sore?

—*"Satires."*

The Emperor's Turbot

When the last Flavius, drunk with fury, tore
The prostrate world, which bled at every pore,
And Rome beheld, in body as in mind,
A bald-pate Nero rise, to curse mankind,
It chanced that, where the fane of Venus stands,
Reared on Ancona's coast by Grecian hands,
A turbot, wandering from the Illyrian main,
Fill'd the wide bosom of the bursting seine.
Monsters so bulky, from its frozen stream,
Mæotis renders to the solar beam,
And pours them, fat with a whole winter's ease,
Through the bleak Euxine, into warmer seas.
The mighty draught the astonished boatman eyes,
And to the emperor's table dooms his prize.
For who would dare to sell it, who to buy,
When the coast swarmed with many a practised spy,
Mud-rakers, prompt to swear the fish had fled
From Cæsar's ponds—ingrate!—where long it fed,
And, thus recaptured, claimed to be restored
To the dominion of its ancient lord?
Nay, if Palphurius may our credit gain,
Whatever rare or precious swims the main,
Is forfeit to the crown, and you may seize
The obnoxious dainty when and where you please.
This point allowed, our wary boatman chose
To give what, else, he had not failed to lose.
Now were the dogstar's sickly fervors o'er;
Earth, pinched with cold, her frozen livery wore;

The old began their quartan fits to fear,
And wintry blasts deformed the beauteous year,
And kept the turbot sweet; yet on he flew,
As if the sultry South corruption blew.
And now the lake, and now the hill he gains,
Where Alba, though in ruins, still maintains
The Trojan fire, which, but for her, were lost,
And worships Vesta, though with less of cost.
The wondering crowd, that gathered to survey
The enormous fish, and barred the fisher's way,
Satiate, at length retires; the gates unfold;
Murmuring, the excluded senators behold
The envied dainty enter. On the man
To great Atrides pressed, and thus began:
"This, for a private table far too great,
Accept, and sumptuously your genius treat;
Haste to unload your stomach, and devour
A turbot, destined to this happy hour.
I sought him not; he marked the toils I set,
And rushed, a willing victim, to my net."
Was flattery e'er so rank? Yet he grows vain,
And his crest rises at the fulsome strain.
When, to divine, a mortal power we raise,
He looks for no hyperboles in praise.
But when was joy unmixed? No pot is found,
Capacious of the turbot's ample round.
In this distress, he calls the chiefs of state,
At once the objects of his scorn and hate,
In whose pale cheeks distrust and doubt appear,
And all a tyrant's friendship breeds of fear.
Scarce was the loud Liburnian heard to say,
"He sits," ere Pegasus was on his way;

Yes, the new bailiff of the affrighted town
(For what were prefects more?) had snatched his gown,
And rushed to council. From the ivory chair
He dealt out justice with no common care;
But yielded oft to those licentious times,
And where he could not punish, winked at crimes.
  Then old, facetious Crispus tripped along,
Of gentle manners and persuasive tongue.
None fitter to advise the lord of all,
Had that pernicious pest, whom thus we call,
Allowed a friend to soothe his savage mood,
And give him counsel, wise at once and good.
But who shall dare this liberty to take,
When, every word you hazard, life's at stake?
Though but of stormy summers, showery springs—
For tyrants' ears, alas! are ticklish things.
So did the good old man his tongue restrain,
Nor strove to stem the torrent's force in vain.
Not one of those, who, by no fears deterred,
Spoke the free soul, and truth to life preferred.
He temporized—thus fourscore summers fled,
Even in that court, securely o'er his head.
  Next him appeared Acilius hurrying on,
Of equal age, and followed by his son;
Who fell, unjustly fell, in early years,
A victim to the tyrant's jealous fears.
But long ere this were hoary hairs become
A prodigy among the great at Rome;
Hence, I had rather owe my humble birth,
Frail brother of the giant-brood, to earth.
Poor youth! in vain the ancient sleight you try;
In vain, with frantic air and ardent eye,

Fling every robe aside, and battle wage
With bears and lions on the Alban stage.
All see the trick and, spite of Brutus' skill,
There are who count him but a driveler still;
Since, in his days, it cost no mighty pains
To outwit a prince with much more beard than brains.
  Rubrius, though not, like these, of noble race,
Followed with equal terror in his face,
And, laboring with a crime too foul to name,
More, than the pathic satirist, lost to shame.
  Montanus' belly next, and next appeared
The legs on which that monstrous pile was reared.
  Crispinus followed, daubed with more perfume,
Thus early, than two funerals consume.
Then bloodier Pompey, practised to betray,
And hesitate the noblest lives away.
Then Fuscus, who, in studious pomp at home,
Planned future triumphs for the arms of Rome.
Blind to the event, those arms a different fate,
Inglorious wounds and Dacian vultures, wait.
  Last, sly Veiento with Catullus came,
Deadly Catullus, who at beauty's name
Took fire, although unseen, a wretch whose crimes
Struck with amaze e'en those outrageous times—
A base, blind parasite, a murderous lord,
From the bridge-end raised to the council-board,
Yet fitter still to dog the traveler's heels,
And whine for alms to the descending wheels.
None dwelt so largely on the turbot's size,
Or raised with such applause his wondering eyes;
But to the left (oh, treacherous want of sight)
He poured his praise: the fish was on the right!

Thus would he at the fencer's matches sit,
And shout with rapture at some fancied hit;
And thus applaud the stage machinery, where
The youths were rapt aloft, and lost in air.
Nor fell Veiento short. As if possessed
With all Bellona's rage, his laboring breast
Burst forth in prophecy, "I see, I see
The omens of some glorious victory!
Some powerful monarch captured! Lo, he rears,
Horrent on every side, his pointed spears!
Arviragus hurled from the British car.
The fish is foreign, foreign is the war."
Proceed, great seer, and what remains untold,
The turbot's age and country, next unfold;
So shall your lord his fortunes better know,
And where the conquest waits, and who the foe.
The emperor now the important question put,
"How say ye, fathers, shall the fish be cut?"
"Oh, far be that disgrace!" Montanus cries;
"No, let a pot be formed, of amplest size,
Within whose slender sides the fish, dread Sire,
May spread his vast circumference entire!
Bring, bring the tempered clay, and let it feel
The quick gyrations of the plastic wheel.
But, Cæsar, thus forewarned, make no campaign,
Unless your potters follow in your train!"
Montanus ended. All approved the plan,
And all, the speech, so worthy of the man!
Versed in the old court luxury, he knew
The feasts of Nero and his midnight crew;
Where oft, when potent drafts had fired the brain,
The jaded taste was spurred to gorge again;

And, in my time, none understood so well
The science of good eating. He could tell,
At the first relish, if his oysters fed
On the Rutupian or the Lucrine bed;
And from a crab or lobster's color, name
The country, nay, the district, whence it came.
Here closed the solemn farce. The fathers rise,
And each, submissive, from the presence hies—
Pale, trembling wretches, whom the chief, in sport,
Had dragged, astonished, to the Alban court;
As if the stern Sicambri were in arms,
Or the fierce Catti threatened new alarms;
As if ill news by flying posts had come,
And gathering nations sought the fall of Rome!

—"*Satires.*"

On Domineering Wives

Now tell me, if thou canst not love a wife,
Made thine by every tie, and thine for life,
Why wed at all? Why waste the wine and cakes
The queasy-stomached guest at parting takes,
And the rich present, which the bridal right
Claims for the favors of the happy night,
The charger, where, triumphantly inscrolled,
The Dacian Hero shines in current gold?
If thou canst love, and thy besotted mind
Is so uxoriously to *one* inclined,
Then bow thy neck, and with submissive air
Receive the yoke thou must forever wear.

To a fond spouse a wife no mercy shows;
Though warmed with equal fires, she mocks his wos,
And triumphs in his spoils; her wayward will
Defeats his bliss, and turns his good to ill.
Naught must be given, if she opposes; naught,
If she opposes, must be sold or bought;
She tells him where to love, and where to hate;
Shuts out the ancient friend, whose beard his gate
Knew from its downy to its hoary state;
And when pimps, parasites, of all degrees,
Have power to will their fortunes as they please,
She dictates his, and impudently dares
To name his very rivals for his heirs.
"Go, crucify that slave!" "For what offense?
Who the accuser? Where the evidence?
For when the life of man is in debate,
No time can be too long, no care too great.
Hear all, weigh all with caution, I advise—"
"Thou sniveler! Is a slave a man?" she cries.
"He's innocent!" "Be't so; 'tis my command,
My will. Let that, sir, for a reason stand."
Thus the virago triumphs, thus she reigns.
Anon she sickens of her first domains,
And seeks for new; husband on husband takes,
Till of her bridal veil one rent she makes.
Again she tires, again for change she burns,
And to the bed she lately left returns,
While the fresh garlands and unfaded boughs
Yet deck the portal of her wondering spouse.
"Eight Husbands to Herself She Gave"—
A rare inscription for her grave!

—"*Satires.*"

Apuleius

Metamorphosis

Fotis came running to me one day in great excitement and trepidation, and informed me that her mistress, having hitherto made no proficiency by other means in her present amour, intended to assume feathers like a bird, and so take flight to the object of her love, and that I must prepare myself with all due care for the sight of such a wonderful proceeding. And now, about the first watch of the night, she escorted me, on tiptoe and with noiseless steps, to that same upper chamber, and bade me peep through a chink in the door, which I did accordingly.

In the first place, Pamphile divested herself of all her garments, and having unlocked a certain cabinet, took out of it several little boxes. Taking the lid off one of them, and pouring some ointment therefrom, she rubbed herself for a considerable time with her hands, smearing herself all over from the tips of her toes to the crown of her head. Then, after she had muttered a long while in a low voice over a lamp, she shook her limbs with tremulous jerks, then gently waved them to and fro, until soft feathers burst forth, strong wings displayed themselves, the nose was hardened and curved into a beak, the nails were compressed and made crooked. Thus did Pamphile become an owl. Then, uttering a querulous scream, she made trial of her powers, leaping little by little from the ground; and presently, raising herself aloft, on full wing, she flew out-of-doors. And thus was she, of her own will, changed, by her own magic arts.

But I, though not enchanted by any magic spell, still, riveted to the spot by astonishment at this performance, seemed to myself to be anything else rather than Lucius. Thus deprived of my senses, and astounded even to insanity, I was in a waking dream, and rubbed my eyes for some time to ascertain whether or not I was awake at all. At last, however, returning to consciousness of the reality of things, I took hold of the right hand of Fotis, and putting it to my eyes, "Suffer me," said I, "I beg of you, to enjoy a great and singular proof of your affection, while the opportunity offers, and give me a little ointment from the same box. Grant this, my sweetest, I entreat you by these breasts of yours, and thus, by conferring on me an obligation that can never be repaid, bind me to you forever as your slave. Be you my Venus, and let me stand by you a winged Cupid."

"And are you, then, sweetheart, for playing me a fox's trick, and for causing me, of my own accord, to let fall the ax upon my legs? Must I run such risk of having my Lucius torn from me by the wolves of Thessaly? Where am I to look for him when he is changed into a bird? When shall I see him again?"

"May the celestial powers," said I, "avert from me such a crime! Though borne aloft on the wings of the eagle itself, soaring through the midst of the heavens, as the trusty messenger, or joyous arm-bearer, of supreme Jove, would I not, after I had obtained this dignity of wing, still fly back every now and then to my nest? I swear to you, by that lovely little knot of hair with which you have enchanted my spirit, that I would prefer no other to my Fotis. And then, besides, I bethink me that as soon as I am rubbed with that ointment, and shall have been changed into a bird of this

kind, I shall be bound to keep at a distance from all human habitations; for what a beautiful and agreeable lover will the ladies gain in an owl! Why, do we not see that these birds of night, when they have got into any house, are eagerly seized and nailed to the doors, in order that they may atone, by their torments, for the evil destiny which they portend to the family by their inauspicious flight? But one thing I had almost forgot to inquire: what must I say, or do, in order to get rid of my wings and return to my own form as Lucius?"

"Be in no anxiety," she said, "about all that matter; for my mistress has made me acquainted with everything that can again change such forms into the human shape. But do not suppose that this was done through any kind feeling toward me, but in order that I might assist her with the requisite remedies when she returns home. Only think with what simple and trifling herbs such a mighty result is brought about: for instance, a little anise, with some leaves of laurel infused in spring water, and used as a lotion and a draft."

Having assured me of this over and over again, she stole into her mistress's chamber with the greatest trepidation, and took a little box out of the casket. Having first hugged and kissed it, and offered up a prayer that it would favor me with a prosperous flight, I hastily divested myself of all my garments, then greedily dipping my fingers into the box, and taking thence a considerable quantity of the ointment, I rubbed it all over my body and limbs. And now, flapping my arms up and down, I anxiously awaited my change into a bird. But no down, no shooting wings appeared. Instead, my hairs became thickened into bristles, and my tender skin was hardened into a hide; my hands and feet, too, no longer

furnished with distinct fingers and toes, formed into massive hoofs, and a long tail projected from the extremity of my spine. My face was now enormous, my mouth wide, my nostrils gaping, and my lips hanging down. In like manner my ears grew hairy and of immoderate length, and I found in every respect I had become enlarged. Thus, hopelessly surveying all parts of my body, I beheld myself changed—not into a bird, but an ass.

I wished to upbraid Fotis for the deed she had done; but, now deprived both of the gesture and voice of man, I could only expostulate with her silently with my under-lip hanging down, and looking sidewise at her with tearful eyes. As for her, as soon as she beheld me thus changed she beat her face with her hands, and cried aloud, "Wretch that I am, I am undone! In my haste and flurry I mistook one box for the other, deceived by their similarity. It is fortunate, however, that a remedy for this transformation is easily to be obtained; for, by only chewing roses, you will put off the form of an ass, and in an instant will become my Lucius once again. I only wish that I had prepared as usual some garlands of roses for us last evening; for then you would not have had to suffer the delay even of a single night. But at the break of dawn the remedy shall be provided for you."

Thus did she lament; and as for me, though I was a perfect ass, and instead of Lucius, a beast of burden, I still retained human sense. Long and deeply, in fact, did I consider with myself whether I ought not to bite and kick that most wicked woman to death. However, better thoughts recalled me from such rash designs, lest, by inflicting on Fotis the punishment of death, I should at once put an end to all chances of efficient assistance. So, bending my head low, and shaking my ears, I silently swallowed my wrongs for a

time, and submitting to my most dreadful misfortune, I betook myself to the stable to the good horse which had carried me so well, and there I found another ass also, which belonged to my former host, Milo. Now it occurred to me that, if there are in dumb animals any silent and natural ties of sympathy, this horse of mine, being influenced by a certain feeling of recognition and compassion, would afford me room for a lodging and the rights of hospitality. But, oh, Jupiter Hospitalis, and all you the guardian divinities of Faith! this very excellent nag of mine and the ass put their heads together and immediately plotted schemes for my destruction; and as soon as they beheld me approaching the manger, laying back their ears and quite frantic with rage, they furiously attacked me with their heels, fearing I had design upon their food. Consequently, I was driven away into the farthest corner from that very barley which the evening before I had placed, with my own hands, before that most grateful servant of mine.

Thus harshly treated and sent into banishment, I betook myself to a corner of the stable. And while I reflected on the insolence of my companions, and formed plans of vengeance against the perfidious steed, for the next day, when I should have become Lucius once more by the aid of the roses, I beheld against the central square pillar which supported the beams of the stable, a statue of the goddess Hippona, standing within a shrine, and nicely adorned with garlands of roses, and those, too, recently gathered. Inspired with hope, the moment I espied the salutary remedy I boldly mounted as far as ever my forelegs could stretch; and then, with neck at full length, and extending my lips as much as I possibly could, I endeavored to catch hold of the garlands. But by a most unlucky chance, just as I was endeavoring

to accomplish this, my servant lad, who had the constant charge of my horse, suddenly espied me, sprang to his feet in a great rage, and exclaimed, "How long are we to put up with this vile hack, which but a few moments ago was for making an attack upon the food of the cattle, and is now doing the same even to the statues of the gods? But if I don't this very instant cause this sacrilegious beast to be both sore and crippled"—and searching for something with which to strike me, he stumbled upon a bundle of sticks that lay there, and, picking out a knotted cudgel, the largest he could find among them all, he did not cease to belabor my poor sides, until a loud thumping and banging at the outer gates, and an uproar of the neighbors shouting "Thieves!" struck him with terror, and he took to his heels.

—*"The Golden Ass."*

Vicissitudes of a Donkey

When the keeper of the horses had taken me to the country, I found there none of the pleasure or the liberty I expected; for his wife, an avaricious, bad woman, immediately yoked me to the mill, and frequently striking me with a green stick, prepared bread for herself and her family at the expense of my hide. And not content to make me drudge for her own food only, she also ground corn for her neighbors, and so made money by my toil. Nor, after all my weary labors, did she even afford me the food which had been ordered for me; for she sold my barley to the neighboring husbandmen, after it had been bruised and ground in that very mill by my own roundabout drudgery; but to me, who

had worked during the whole of the day at that laborious machine, she only gave, toward evening, some dirty, unsifted, and very gritty bran. I was brought low enough by these miseries; but cruel fortune exposed me to fresh torments, in order, I suppose, that I might boast of my brave deeds, both in peace and war, as the saying is. For that excellent equerry, complying, rather late, indeed, with his master's orders, for a short time permitted me to associate with the herds of horses.

At length a free ass, I capered for joy, and softly ambling up to the mares, chose out such as I thought would be the fittest for my concubines. But here my joyful hopes gave place to extreme danger. For the stallions, who were terribly strong creatures, more than a match for any ass, regarding me with suspicion, furiously pursued me as their rival, without respect for the laws of hospitable Jupiter. One of them, with his head and neck and ample chest aloft, struck at me like a pugilist with his forefeet; another, turning his brawny back, let fly at me with his hind feet; and another, with a vicious neigh, his ears thrown back, and showing his white teeth, sharp as spears, bit me all over. It was like what I have read in history of the King of Thrace, who exposed his unhappy guests to be lacerated and devoured by wild horses; for so sparing was that powerful tyrant of his barley, that he appeased the hunger of his voracious horses by casting human bodies to them for food. In fact, I was so worried and distracted by the continual attacks of the horses, that I wished myself back again at the mill-round.

Fortune, however, would not be satisfied with my torments, and soon after visited me with another calamity; for I was employed to bring home wood from a mountain, and a

boy, the most villainous of all boys, was appointed to drive me. It was not only that I was wearied by toiling up and down the steep and lofty mountain, nor that I wore away my hoofs by running on sharp stones, but I was cudgeled without end, so that all my bones ached to the very marrow. Moreover, by continually striking me on the off-haunch, and always in the same place, till the skin was broken, he occasioned a great ulcerous cavity, gaping like a trench or a window; yet he never ceased to hit me on the raw. He likewise laid such a load of wood on my back that you might have thought it was a burden prepared for an elephant, and not for a donkey. And whenever the ill-balanced load inclined to one side, instead of taking away some of the fagots from the heavier side, and thus easing me by somewhat lightening, or at least equalizing the pressure, he always remedied the inequality of the weight by the addition of stones. Nor yet, after so many miseries which I had endured, was he content with the immoderate weight of my burden; but when it happened that we had to pass over a river, he would leap on my back in order to keep his feet dry, as if his weight was but a trifling addition to the heavy mass. And if by any accident I happened to fall, through the weight of my burden and the slipperiness of the muddy bank, instead of giving me a helping hand, as he ought to have done, and pulling me up by the head-stall, or by my tail, or removing a part of my load, till at least I had got up again, this paragon of ass-drivers gave me no help at all, however weary I might be, but beginning from my head, or rather from my ears, he thrashed all the hair off my hide with a huge stick.

Another piece of cruelty he practised on me was this: he twisted together a bundle of the sharpest and most venomous

thorns, and tied them to my tail as a pendulous torment; so that, jerking against me when I walked, they pricked and stabbed me intolerably. Hence, I was in a sore dilemma; for when I ran away from him, to escape his unmerciful drubbings, I was hurt by the more vehement pricking of the thorns; and if I stood still for a short time, in order to avoid that pain, I was compelled by blows to go on. In fact, the rascally boy seemed to think of nothing else than how he might be the death of me by some means or other; and that he sometimes threatened with oaths to accomplish. And, indeed, there happened a thing by which his detestable malice was stimulated to more baneful efforts. On a certain day, when his excessive insolence had overcome my patience, I lifted up my powerful heels against him; and for this he retaliated by the following atrocity: he brought me into the road heavily laden with a bundle of coarse flax, securely bound together with cords, and placed in the middle of the burden a burning coal, which he had stolen from the neighboring village. Presently the fire spread through the slender fibers, flames burst forth, and I was ablaze all over. There appeared no refuge from immediate destruction, no hope of safety, and such a conflagration did not admit of delay or afford time for deliberation. Fortune, however, shone upon me in these cruel circumstances—perhaps for the purpose of reserving me for future dangers, but, at all events, liberating me from present and decreed death. By chance perceiving a neighboring pool muddy with the rain of the preceding day, I threw myself headlong into it; and the flame being immediately extinguished, I came out, lightened of my burden and liberated from destruction. But that audacious young rascal cast the blame of this most wicked deed of his on me, and affirmed to all the shepherds that as

I was passing near the neighbors' fires, I stumbled on purpose, and threw my load into the blaze. And he added, laughing at me, "How long shall we waste food on this fiery monster?"—"*The Golden Ass.*"

Oriental Wit and Humor

The Humor of the East

By William Hayes Ward

THE oldest literature of the world that has come down to us was said or sung on the banks of the Nile and the Euphrates; but it is not large and varied, like that of Greece and Rome. For Egypt we have chiefly the "Book of the Dead," very imperfect records of conquests, a story or two, and a collection of moral sayings; but all these are generally of a very serious vein. Yet the ancient Egyptians did not lack humor, as is abundantly shown in their caricatures. That there were stories of the Brer Rabbit sort current more than a thousand years B.C., we know from an Egyptian papyrus, which shows us a cat pompously carrying a shepherd's crook and driving a flock of geese; then a fox carries a satchel by a stick over his shoulder, after which comes a second fox as guardian. Facing the procession is a lion, as if the animals were in some way presented to the king of beasts, as in the stories of Reineke Fuchs. All sorts of odd contortions of dancers and wrestlers are depicted on the monuments, and even the more serious figures, such as the cynocephalus and the extravagantly squat god Bes, are distinctly grotesque.

In the art and literature of the Babylonians and Assyrians it would be difficult to find a single element of the amusing. They seem to have been a very serious people. To be sure, their records, so far as they are not mere business documents, are chiefly historical or religious, which do not culti-

vate humor. There may be a bit of it, although it is more bitterness than banter, in the abuse which Gilgamesh throws at the great goddess Ishtar for her behavior to her lovers, the god Tammuz, the lion, the horse, and the eagle, each of whom she had treated with extremest cruelty. The artists and the historians thought it more honor to tell and show how the king impaled conquered princes and gouged out the eyes of kings, like Zedekiah of Judah, than to waste their time and their reeds with vapid jokes.

The Hebrews were not without a sense of humor. They made riddles, and Samson's riddle cost the Philistines the lives of thirty men of war. They made his wife cajole him into telling her the answer, and then he said:

> "If ye had not plowed with my heifer,
> Ye had not found out my riddle."

Hardly can a finer piece of sarcasm be found than that by which Jotham taunts the men who had chosen the worthless Abimelech to be their prince; and equally taunting is the brilliant attack of Isaiah on the worshipers of idols:

"He planteth an ash, and the rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a man to burn: for he will take thereof, and warm himself; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh bread; yea, he maketh a god, and worshipeth it; he maketh it a graven image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the fire; with part thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied: yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, 'Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire': and the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image: he falleth down unto it, and worshipeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, 'Deliver me; for thou art my god.'"

The later Hebrew writers in their immense rabbinic literature freely added the touch of humor to their expositions. A *midrash* on Ecclesiastes tells how a man saw a heron bring a branch and lay it on a dead bird, which immediately came to life. He said, "That is fine; with it I will revive all the dead of Israel." He started with the branch from Babylon for Palestine. On the way he saw a dead fox, and laid the branch on it. The fox came to life and ran away. Farther on he saw a dead lion on the plain, and he laid the branch on him. He, too, revived, but instead of running away, he ate the man up. The tale is serious, and intended to teach the same lesson that we have in the Garden of Eden, that the tree of life, which gives immortality, is not for man, only for the gods; but the Genesis story is very serious, while this is also amusing.

If time has strained out nearly all the floating trifles of the perishable literature of papyrus and clay tablets, it has left us the lighter fancies of Arab and Persian and Turkish poetry and prose. The very framework of the "Thousand and One Nights" is amusing, the story left half told each night to save the teller's life; and surprise and amusement are in half the tales. It was terrible to the poor fisherman when the genie burst from the opened jar, but it is amusing to the reader. It was wearisome to Sindbad, the sailor, to carry the Old Man of the Sea on his shoulders, but Sindbad himself said it made him laugh to tell it. One cannot but laugh at the wicked brother who could not remember to say "Open Sesame." So the sense of the strange and bizarre seems to run through Arabic story and verse, as it does through the Turkish; and the many tales of Nasir-ed-Din, half wise and half fool, have made generations of Turks merry. The Greek *Scholastikos,* butt of classic jokes, is matched to-day

by the Turk who refused to lend his donkey to a neighbor, declaring that it had been sent to a distant village; and who, when the donkey then brayed behind the partition, and the neighbor reproached him for his lie, indignantly berated the man who would take the word of an ass against that of a pious Moslem.

But it is among the Persians that we find sentiment mated with wit, till in Omar Khayyam we seem to meet another Lucian, in a sort of Buddhist reincarnation, a glib and impartial mocker of creeds. As gay as the old Greek is he, standing aside to watch amused the game of life, and enjoy it, no more like the zealot of the Koran than Lucian was like the grave and stupidly good Marcus Aurelius, who seemed to say nothing but "*Abstine et sustine*"—Abstain and endure.

The mention of incarnation carries us to that other and greater land of the farther East to which, by our race and language, we have a nearer relation—the land of Brahma and Buddha. We can find the origin of more than one of the merry tales of Boccaccio and Chaucer in the six hundred *jatakas,* wherein Buddha tells the stories of his many incarnations. One of the shrewdest of the stories told on the road to Canterbury, the Pardoner's Tale of the three robbers who killed each other to possess the treasure, is given much more elaborately in one of the *jatakas.* But the trouble with these stories is that we are never quite sure whether they are told with a twinkle or in solemn earnest, so close is a smile to the gravity of a Buddhist adage. We may believe, however, that what seems ludicrous to us in the action of monkeys playing as men, did not quite lack humor in the language of those who talked Sanskrit or Pali. The disciples who listened as their master

told of the foolish carpenter who smote a mosquito on his father's bald pate with an ax, must have responded with a smile even though it was a parable to teach the lesson that a foolish friend is worse than a wise enemy. So when they were instructed about the man who earned fabulous wealth in four months out of the profits of the sale of a dead mouse, or about the *Mahadeva* who, after reigning 252,000 years, and yet having 84,000 years to live, went into pious retirement because he had found the first gray hair in his head; or of the crows who in their anger tried to drink up the sea; or the crane who cozened the fishes by the promise to take them to a larger pool, but was himself cozened and choked to death by a crab; or the monkeys set to water a garden, who pulled up the plants to see if the roots were wet—we may be confident that a hearty laugh went around the circle. Some people warn us that while our Gospels tell us that Jesus wept, they never say that he smiled. We may doubt it, for he took pains to put his opponents in a laughable position; but surely the great Buddha kept his disciples in good humor as he preached to them the suppression of all passions. Religion is no foe to humor. Clergymen are famous for their funny stories. When two young schoolmates of very different temper went as missionaries, early in the last century, to Turkey, one of them wrote from Smyrna to the other at Constantinople, "Dear Brother Goodell, you laugh too much!" The answer came back equally brief, "Dear brother, you cry too much!" And it was the one who laughed who lived for sixty years of most useful service. We may raise the question whether the Buddha's long life was not preserved by his mirth.

Even the noblest hymns of the "Rig-Veda," repeated in solemn worship, had their touch of humor, although it must

be admitted that some serious German scholars stoutly deny the smile. Take a few stanzas from the "Hymn of the Frogs," for the opening of the rainy season:

"When the first shower of the rainy season
Has fallen on them, parched with thirst and longing,
In glee each wet and dripping frog jumps upward;
The green one and the speckled join their voices.

"They shout aloud like Brahmans drunk with soma,
When they perform their annual devotions:
Like priests at service sweating o'er the kettle,
They issue forth; not one remains in hiding.

"The frogs that bleat like goats, that low like cattle,
The green one and the speckled give us riches;
Whole herds of cows may they bestow upon us,
And grant us length of days through sacrificing."

The Sanskrit wit gives itself free scope, however, in the drama, for the drama seems everywhere to have its origin in buffoonery. Every drama has a regular buffoon, who, curiously enough, is always a Brahman. His part reminds one a little of the *Gracioso* in the Spanish drama, but that is a large subject, to which reference can only be made here.

So it is in the drama that the Chinese and Japanese literature delights in displaying the grotesqueries in life with which we are so familiar in their art. In Japan, the Buddhist religion has to a considerable degree given direction to their humor, as illustrated in the story, a favorite with Buddhist preachers, of the two frogs, one of which left Tokyo to see the world at the same time that a second left Kyoto on the same errand. They met on the summit of a

high hill, and each rested his forefeet on a high stone, and fronted toward the city from which the other had come. "It is no different," they each said, "from home;" and they turned back by the road from which they had come, forgetting that as their eyes were in the back of their heads each had seen only his own city.

Let this brief and most imperfect introduction to the wit and humor of the world's most ancient history and most populous races, from which all literature as well as all religion and culture had its origin, conclude with the wit and wisdom of an Arabian adage:

"Man is four:
He who knows not, and knows not he knows not—
He is a fool; shun him.
He who knows not, and knows he knows not—
He is simple; teach him.
He who knows, and knows not he knows—
He is asleep; awaken him.
He who knows, and knows he knows—
He is wise; follow him."

Vishnu-Serma, also called Pilpay

The Elephant Devoured by Jackals

That which cannot be effected by force may be achieved by cunning. An elephant was killed by a jackal, through going over a swampy place.

In the forest Brahmaranya there was an elephant, whose name was Karphooratilaka [spotted white], who having been observed by the jackals, they all determined, that if he could by any stratagem be killed, he would be four months' provisions for them all. One of them, who was exceedingly viciously inclined, and by nature treacherous, declared that he would engage, by the strength of his own judgment, to effect his death. Some time after, this deceitful wretch went up to the elephant, and having saluted him, said, "God-like sir, condescend to grant me an audience." "Who art thou?" demanded the elephant, "and whence comest thou?" "My name," replied he, "is Kshudrabuddhi [evil-minded], a jackal, sent into thy presence by all the inhabitants of the forest, assembled for that purpose, to represent that, as it is not expedient to reside in so large a forest as this without a chief, your Highness, endued with all the cardinal virtues, hath been selected to be anointed Rajah of the woods."

It is said:

He who, by walking forever in the ways of those who are preferred, is exceedingly pure, of a noble mind, virtuous and just, and experienced in the rules of policy, is worthy to be chosen master of the earth.

Again:

The lord of the land, like the clouds, is the reservoir of the people; for when the clouds fail, do they not find succor in their king?

But:

In this world, which is subject to the power of One above, a man of good principles is hard to be found living in a country for the most part governed by the use of the rod. From the dread of the rod, like a woman of good repute unto her husband, he will repair for protection even unto the weak or unfortunate, to the sick, or to the poor.

"Then, that we may not lose the lucky moment," continued the jackal, "be pleased to follow quickly." Saying this, he cocked his tail and went away. The elephant, whose reason was perverted by the lust of power, took the same road as the jackal, and followed him so exactly that at length he stuck fast in a great swamp. "Oh, my friend," cried the elephant, "what is to be done in this disaster? I am sinking in a deep swamp!" The jackal laughed, and said, "Please your divine Highness, take hold of my tail with your trunk, and get out. This is the fruit of those words which thou didst place confidence in."

They say:

As often as thou shalt be deprived of the society of the good, so often shalt thou fall into the company of knaves.

After a few days, the elephant dying for want of food, his flesh was devoured by the jackals.

I repeat, therefore:

That which cannot be effected by force may be achieved by cunning.—"The Friendly Instructor" (*Hitopadesa*).

A Lion Tricked by a Rabbit

He who hath sense hath strength. Where hath he strength who wanteth judgment? See how a lion, when intoxicated with anger, was overcome by a rabbit.

Upon the mountain Mandara there lived a lion, whose name was Durganta [hard to go near], who was very exact in complying with the ordinance for animal sacrifices. So at length all the different species assembled, and in a body represented that, as by his present mode of proceeding the forest would be cleared all at once, if it pleased his Highness, they would each of them in his turn provide him an animal for his daily food. And the lion gave his consent accordingly. Thus every beast delivered his stipulated provision, till at length, it coming to the rabbit's turn, he began to meditate in this manner: "Policy should be practised by him who would save his life; and I myself shall lose mine, if I do not take care. Suppose I lead him after another lion? Who knows how that may turn out for me? I will approach him slowly, as if fatigued." The lion by this time began to be very hungry; so, seeing the rabbit coming toward him, he called out in a great passion, "What is the reason thou comest so late?" "Please your Highness," said the rabbit, "as I was coming along I was forcibly detained by another of your species; but having given him my word that I would return immediately, I came here to represent it to your Highness." "Go quickly," said the lion in a rage, "and show me where this vile wretch may be found!" Accordingly, the rabbit conducted the lion to the

brink of a deep well, where being arrived, "There," said the rabbit, "look down and behold him." At the same time he pointed to the reflected image of the lion in the water, who, swelling with pride and resentment, leaped into the well, as he thought, upon his adversary; and thus put an end to his life.

I repeat, therefore:

He who hath sense hath strength. Where hath he strength who wanteth judgment?

—*"The Friendly Instructor"* (*Hitopadesa*).

The Blue Jackal

The fool who forsaketh his own party, and delighteth to dwell with the opposite side, may be killed by them; as was the case with the blue jackal.

A CERTAIN jackal, as he was roaming about the borders of a town, just as his inclinations led him, fell into a dyer's vat; but being unable to get out, in the morning he feigned himself dead. At length the master of the vat, which was filled with indigo, came, and seeing a jackal lying with his legs uppermost, his eyes closed, and his teeth bare, concluded that he was dead, and so, taking him out, he carried him a good way from the town, and there left him. The sly animal instantly got up and ran into the woods, when, observing that his coat was turned blue, he meditated in this manner: "I am now of the finest color! What great exaltation may I not bring about for myself?" Saying this, he called a number of jackals together, and addressed them

in the following words: "Know that I have lately been sacredly baptized king of the forests, by the hands of the goddess herself who presides over these woods, with a water drawn from a variety of choice herbs. Observe my color, and henceforward let every business be transacted according to my orders." The rest of the jackals, seeing him of such a fine complexion, prostrated themselves before him, and said, "According as your Highness commands!" By this step he made himself honored by his own relations, and so gained the supreme power over those of his own species, as well as all the other inhabitants of the forests. But after a while, finding himself surrounded by a court of the first quality, composed of tigers and the like, he began to look down upon his relations; and at length he kept them at a distance. A certain old jackal perceiving that his brethren were very much cast down at this behavior, cried: "Do not despair! If it continue thus, this imprudent friend of ours will force us to be revenged. Let me alone to contrive his downfall. The lion, and the rest who pay him court, are taken by his outward appearance; and they obey him as their king, because they are not aware that he is nothing but a jackal. Do something, then, by which he may be found out. Let this plan be pursued: Assemble, all of you, in a body about the close of the evening, and set up one general howl in his hearing; and I'll warrant you, the natural disposition of his species will incline him to join in the cry."

For:

Whatever may be the natural propensity of any one is very hard to be overcome. If a dog were made king, would he not gnaw his shoe-straps?

"And thus," continued the speaker, "the tigers, discovering that he is nothing but a jackal, will presently put him to

death." The plan was executed, and the event came about just as it had been foretold.

They say:

An intimate enemy is acquainted with everything which relateth to us: our blemishes, our hearts, and our degree of courage.

I repeat, therefore:

The fool who forsaketh his own party, and delighteth to dwell with the opposite side, may be killed by them.

—*"The Friendly Instructor"* (*Hitopadesa*).

Kalidasa

Hunting with a King

MATHAVYA, *a Jester.*

Math. Heigh-ho, what an unfortunate fellow I am, worn to a shadow by my royal friend's sporting propensities! "Here's a deer!" "There goes a boar!" "Yonder's a tiger!" This is the constant subject of his remarks, while we tramp about in the heat of the day from jungle to jungle on paths where the trees give us no shade. If we are thirsty, we can get nothing to drink but some dirty water from a mountain stream full of dry leaves, tasting vilely bitter. If we are hungry, we are obliged to eat tough, flavorless game, and have to gulp it down at odd times, as best we can. Even at night I have no peace. Sleeping is out of the question, with my bones all aching from trotting after my sporting friend; or, if I do contrive to doze, I am awakened at early dawn by the horrible din of a lot of rascally beaters and huntsmen, who must needs begin their deafening operations before sunrise. But these are not my only troubles; for here's a fresh grievance, like a new boil rising upon an old one: Yesterday, while some of us were lagging behind, my royal friend went into a hermit's enclosure after a deer, and there—worse luck—he caught sight of a beautiful girl called Sakuntala, the hermit's daughter. From that moment not a single thought did he have of returning to town; and all night long not a wink of sleep did he get for his thoughts of the girl. But see—here he comes! I will pre-

tend to stand in the easiest attitude for resting my bruised and crippled limbs.

Enter KING DUSHYANTA.

Math. Ah, my friend, my hands cannot move to greet you with the accustomed salutation! I can do no more than command my lips to wish your Majesty success.

King. Why, what has paralyzed your limbs?

Math. You might as well ask me how it is my eye waters after you have poked your finger into it!

King. I don't understand what you mean. Explain yourself.

Math. My dear friend, is that straight reed you see yonder bent crooked by its own act, or by the force of the current?

King. The current of the river is the cause, I suppose.

Math. Yes, just as you are the cause of my crippled limbs.

King. How so?

Math. Here you are, living the life of a savage in a desolate, forlorn region, while the government of the country is taking care of itself. And poor I am no longer master of my own legs, but have to follow you about day after day in your hunting for wild beasts, till all my bones ache and get out of joint. Please, my dear friend, do let us have one day's rest!—"*Sakuntala.*"

Unknown Author

The Creation of Woman

In the beginning, when Twashtri came to the creation of woman, he found that he had exhausted his materials in the making of man, and that no solid elements were left. In this dilemma, after profound meditation, he did as follows:

He took the rotundity of the moon, and the curves of creepers, and the clinging of tendrils, and the trembling of grass, and the slenderness of the reed, and the bloom of flowers, and the lightness of leaves, and the tapering of the elephant's trunk, and the glances of deer, and the joyous gaiety of sunbeams, and the weeping of clouds, and the fickleness of the winds, and the timidity of the hare, and the vanity of the peacock, and the softness of the parrot's bosom, and the hardness of adamant, and the cruelty of the tiger, and the hot glow of fire, and the coldness of snow, and the chattering of jays, and the cooing of the dove, and the hypocrisy of the crane, and the fidelity of the drake. Compounding all these together, he made woman, and gave her to man.

But after a week man came to him, and said:

"Lord, this creature that you have given me makes my life miserable. She chatters incessantly, and teases me beyond endurance, never leaving me alone. She requires attention every moment, takes up all my time, weeps about nothing, and is always idle. So I have come to give her back again, as I cannot live with her."

Then Twashtri said, "Very well," and took her back.

After another week man came to him again, saying:

"Lord, I find that my life is lonely since I surrendered that creature. I remember how she used to dance and sing to me, and look at me out of the corner of her eye, and play with me, and cling to me. Her laughter was music; she was beautiful to look at, and soft to touch. Pray give her back to me again."

And Twashtri said, "Very well," and returned woman to man.

But after only three days had passed, man appeared once more before the Creator, to whom he said:

"Lord, I know not how it is, but, after all, I have come to the conclusion that she is more trouble than pleasure to me. Therefore I beg that you take her back again."

Twashtri, however, replied:

"Out upon you! Be off! I will have no more of this. You must manage how you can."

Then quoth man:

"But I cannot live with her!"

To which Twashtri answered:

"Neither could you live without her." And he turned his back on man, and went on with his work.

Then said man:

"Alas, what is to be done? For I cannot live either with or without her!"—*"The Churning of the Ocean of Time" (Sansara-sagara-manthanam).*

Hebrew Wit and Humor

The Old Testament

Jotham's Fable of the Trees

ABIMELECH, the son of Jerubbaal, went to Shechem unto his mother's brethren, and communed with them, and with all the family of the house of his mother's father, saying:

"Speak, I pray you, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, Whether it is better for you, either that all the sons of Jerubbaal, who are threescore and ten persons, reign over you, or that one reign over you? Remember also that I am your bone and your flesh."

And his mother's brethren spake of him, in the ears of all the men of Shechem, all these words. And their hearts inclined to follow Abimelech; for they said, "He is our brother."

And they gave him threescore and ten pieces of silver out of the house of Baalberith, wherewith Abimelech hired vain and light persons, who followed him.

And he went unto his father's house at Ophrah, and slew his brethren, the sons of Jerubbaal, being threescore and ten persons, upon one stone. Notwithstanding, Jotham, the youngest son of Jerubbaal, was left; for he hid himself.

And all the men of Shechem gathered together, and all the house of Millo, and went and made Abimelech king, by the plain of the pillar that was in Shechem.

And when they told it to Jotham, he went and stood on the top of Mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them:

"Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you.

"The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them; and they said unto the olive-tree, 'Reign thou over us.' But the olive-tree said unto them, 'Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?'

"And the trees said to the fig-tree, 'Come thou, and reign over us.'

"But the fig-tree said unto them, 'Should I forsake my sweetness, and my good fruit, and go to be promoted over the trees?'

"Then said the trees unto the vine, 'Come thou, and reign over us.'

"And the vine said unto them, 'Should I leave my wine, which cheereth God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees?'

"Then said all the trees unto the bramble, 'Come thou, and reign over us.'

"And the bramble said unto the trees, 'If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then come and put your trust in my shadow; and if not, let fire come out of the bramble, and devour the cedars of Lebanon.'

"Now, therefore, if ye have done truly and sincerely, in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands:

"(For my father fought for you, and adventured his life far, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian; and ye are risen up against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, threescore and ten persons, upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maid

servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother):

"If ye, then, have dealt truly and sincerely with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you; but if not, let fire come out from Abimelech, and devour the men of Shechem, and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem, and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech."

And Jotham ran away, and fled, and went to Beer, and dwelt there, for fear of Abimelech his brother.

—"*Book of Judges.*"

Sayings from the Talmud

The liar is punished when he tells the truth, for then nobody believes him.

Use your best vessel to-day; by to-morrow it may be broken.

A donkey will complain of the cold in midsummer.

The soldiers fight, and the kings are heroes.

Step down in choosing a wife; step up in choosing a friend.

Throw no stones into the well that gives you water.

Repent of your sins the day before you die.

A small coin in a large jar makes much noise.

The wine is the master's, but the serving-man is thanked for it.

The cat and the rat are friends over a carcass.

Truth is burdensome; few have inclination to carry it.

This world is the waiting-room to the next.

If it were not for a man's passions, he would neither build a house, marry a wife, beget children, nor work.

Keep away from well-meaning fools.

It is better to be a lion's tail than a fox's head.

Silence is the hedge that guards wisdom.

Too many captains sink the ship.

One man says grace, another eats.

If a thief is wanting for an opportunity, he believes himself an honest man.

A man will see anybody's leprosy but his own.

Not what you say of yourself is accepted, but what your friends say.

Syrian Wit and Humor

Abu'l-Faraj Gregorius—"Bar-Hebræus"

Advice of Physicians

When a sick man asked his physician, who was wont to jest, about a drug, he said to him, "Take an emollient of violet which hath grown as large as a clod of dung, and pour upon it as much boiling water as the juice which cometh out from a gourd; macerate them together until the mixture becometh like oil, and drink it." The sick man said to him, "Perhaps if I were beaten with a hundred stripes I might do the things which thou sayest, but without the stripes I never will."

Another physician was asked, "What is the aim and end of the art of healing?" He replied, "The preservation of health in our equals and friends, and the driving of sickness into our enemies."

When a certain man came to a physician to inquire of him concerning an attack of colic which had come upon him, the physician said to him, "Eat a few thorns." And the man brought out ink and paper to write upon, and said to the physician, "Repeat, pray, what dost thou advise?" And the physician said unto him, "Eat a few thorns, together with a bushel of barley." And the man said, "Thou saidst nothing at all about barley at first." And the mediciner replied to him, "No, I did not, for I did not know until this moment that thou wert an ass."

An actor once said to a jovial physician, "The colic hath got hold of the ends of my hair, and my belly is becom-

ing black." The physician said to him, "Shave thy head and thy beard, and thou wilt never again have colic in the ends of thy hair; and as for the duskiness of thy belly, paint it with antimony, and thou wilt be gratified therewith."

When a certain mirthful physician was passing by the door of a bath he saw a naked man coming out, and he said to him, "Why art thou going forth naked? Go in, lest thou suffer harm." And the man said, "They have stolen my clothes, and I am going out to seek for them." And the physician said, "Let me bleed thee, then, that thy affliction may be diminished."

To another mediciner it was said, "What is the most convenient time for eating?" And he replied, "To him that hath anything to eat when he is hungry, and to him that hath nothing when he findeth something."

The possessor of a delicate stomach coming to a doctor of physic, he asked him the reason why he was sick, and he replied, "I have eaten burnt bread." And the physician said to him, "Paint thine eyes with stibium, or with something that will sharpen thy vision." To which the patient replied, "I did not ask thee about mine eyes, but about my stomach." "I know that," was the answer, "but I say unto thee, paint thine eyes with something that will sharpen thy vision, in order that thou mayest observe the bread which is burnt, and mayest not eat of it."

An individual who had once been a painter left off painting and became a doctor of medicine. When it was said to him, "Why hast thou done this?" he replied, "The errors made in painting all eyes see and scrutinize; but the mistakes of the healing art the ground covereth."

Seeing a man who had had a blow on the head about to bind it up with salt and caraway seeds, his physician said

to him, "Art thou going to send down thine head to the oven to be baked?"—*"Book of Laughable Stories."*

Pleasantries of Comedians

To a certain comedian it was said, "When a cock riseth up in the early morning hours, why doth he hold one foot in the air?" He replied, "If he should lift up both feet together he would fall down."

A comedian said, "If it be only those that are weary and heavy-laden who are to enter Paradise, as our Lord said, there is nothing that will go in before the harp, for in this world he endureth much trial and tribulation. His throat is squeezed, his ear is twisted, his belly is smitten, and when he is old he is thrown into the fire."

An actor said, "I and my brother were twins, and we both came forth from the womb at one time. He hath become a merchant, while I am a wandering beggar. How, then, can the opinions of the astronomers be held to be true? This proof alone is quite sufficient to show their falsehood."

Having taken money on loan from a certain man, a son of the stage denied that he had done so, and having been brought before a judge, the judge said to the owner of the money, "Hast thou any witnesses?" And the lender answered, "No." The judge said to the actor, "Swear now to me that thou hast not received the money." And the actor replied, "If thou wilt allow it, prithee let my brother swear for me, for I know certainly that he hath not taken anything."

Going about in Sebastia in the winter season dressed in

a new flaxen garment, a comic actor was thus accosted, "Give me this tunic of thine, and thou wilt still have thy cloak; thy Christ commanded thee to give both thy tunic and thy cloak to whosoever asked thee for them." But he replied, "The words of Christ regard me not on this matter! For this commandment was not given by Him to the people of Sebastia in the winter season, although it may have been given to the people of Palestine in the summer season."

The wife of a certain comedian was half-way up a ladder, and he swore that he would never again have aught more to do with her, whether she came down or whether she went up. And when the woman heard this she threw herself down from the ladder on the ground, and said, "Behold, I did not come down, and I did not go up, but I fell down." Her husband said to her, "Believe me, if only the people of the city were acquainted with thee they would certainly hire thee to teach them cunning ways of making their decisions."

The wife of another man of the theater, being with child, she looked at her husband's ugly face, and said, "Wo is me if the child which I carry in my womb resembleth thee." And he said, "Nay, but wo be to thee if he doth not resemble me, for thou shalt no longer eat my bread, and I will send thee away to him whom the child shall resemble."

A comic actor saw a Jew who had become a Christian, and who was not leading a very good life, and he said to him, "Oh, thou who didst provoke Moses to wrath, and who dost not please Christ, go now to Mohammed. Perhaps, however, thou wilt die on thy first coming to him, and before thou hast time to provoke him to wrath, for I know that if thou wert converted to him for long thou wouldst anger him."

While another actor was eating fish and milk, it was said to him, "Art thou not afraid to put milk and fish into thy stomach together?" And he replied, "How can the fish be sensitive to the milk, seeing that he is already dead?"

When a certain comedian got home, and found a sieve laid upon his couch, he hung himself up on the peg in the wall. His wife said to him, "What is this? Art thou possessed of a devil?" And he said to her, "Nay, but when I saw the sieve in my place, I went to its place."

One friend said to another, "When thou art traveling by night, and wouldst that the dogs should not molest thee, shout in their faces the psalm wherein occur the words, 'Save my only one from the mouth of the dogs.'" A son of the stage, standing by, added, "Nay, but let him also take a stick in his hand, for all dogs do not understand the psalms, although there may be among them some who read them."

An actor who hated the eggplant, having been invited by a certain nobleman, found that all his dishes were made therewith; and he said to the servant, "Give me some water that I may drink—that is, if there be no eggplant in it."

Going to the house of a certain rich man who was sick, a friend from the theater inquired concerning his illness, and the sick man said to him, "Boils have broken out upon me in a loathsome place." The other replied, "I do not see any in thy face," meaning "Thy face is a loathsome place."

One who practised the mimic art had a wife whose face was very ugly, and one rainy and gloomy day she said to him, "How can one use such a day as this advantageously?" He said to her, "In divorce and separation."

A comrade of his was asked, "Is wheat flour very dear in

the market to-day?" The reply was, "I never inquired, for I only buy baked bread."

A man who had sore eyes was asked by a buffoon, "With what dost thou treat the disease in thine eyes?" And the man replied, "With the singing of psalms, and with the prayers of my mother, who is a nun." The buffoon rejoined, "These are very excellent things, indeed, but a little antimony is needed with them."

A sick actor's visitor, who was a very foolish man, enquired, "What wouldst thou that I should do for thee?" The reply was, "Grant me the favor not to come into my presence again."—*"Book of Laughable Stories."*

Arabian Wit and Humor

The Thousand and One Nights

The Barmecide's Feast

My brother Schacabac, the Hare-lipped, was at first sufficiently industrious to employ the money which he had inherited in a very advantageous manner; but at length, by reverse of fortune, he was reduced to the necessity of begging his bread. In this occupation he acquitted himself with great address, and his chief aim was to procure admission, by bribing the officers and domestics, into the houses of the great, and by having access to their persons to excite their compassion.

He one day passed a very magnificent building, through the door of which he observed a spacious court, where he saw a vast number of servants. He went up to one of them, and inquired to whom the house belonged. "My good man," answered the domestic, "where can you come from, to ask such a question? Any one you met would tell you it belonged to a Barmecide." Schacabac, to whom the liberal and generous dispositions of the Barmecides were well known, addressed himself to the porters, for there were more than one, and requested them to afford him some charity. "Come in," answered they, "no one prevents you, and speak to our master; he will send you back well satisfied."

My brother did not expect so much kindness; and after returning many thanks to the porters, he, with their permission, entered the palace, which was so large that it took him some time to find the apartment belonging to the Barmecide. He at length came to a large square building in a

most beautiful style of architecture, into which he entered by a vestibule that led to a fine garden, the walks of which were formed of stones of different colors very pleasant to the eye. The apartments which surrounded this building on the ground floor were almost all open, and shaded only by some large curtains in order to keep out the sun, and which were drawn aside to admit the fresh air when the heat began to subside.

Schacabac would have been most highly delighted in so pleasant a spot, had his mind been sufficiently at ease to have enjoyed it. He advanced still farther, and entered a hall which was very richly furnished, and ornamented with foliage, painted in azure and gold. He perceived a venerable old man, whose beard was long and white, sitting on a sofa and in the most distinguished place. Hence he judged it was the master of the house. In fact, it was the Barmecide himself, who told him in an obliging manner that he was welcome, and asked him what he wished. "My lord," answered my brother in a lamentable tone, in order to excite his pity, "I am a poor man, who stands very much in need of the assistance of such powerful and generous persons as yourself." He could not have done better than address himself to the person he did, for he was possessed of a thousand amiable qualities.

The Barmecide was much astonished at my brother's answer; and putting both his hands to his breast, as if to tear his habit, as a mark of commiseration, "Is it possible," he cried, "that I should live at Bagdad, and that such a man as you should be so much distressed as you say you are? I cannot suffer this." At this exclamation my brother, thinking he was going to give him a singular proof of his liberality, wished him every blessing. "It shall never be said,"

replied the Barmecide, "that I abandon you, nor do I intend that you shall again leave me." "Sir," replied my brother, "I swear to you that I have not eaten anything this day." "What!" cried the Barmecide, "is it true that at this late hour you have not yet broken your fast? Alas! poor man, he will die with hunger! Here, boy," added he, raising his voice, "bring us instantly a basin of water, that we may wash our hands."

Although no boy made his appearance, and my brother observed neither basin nor water, the Barmecide nevertheless began to rub his hands, as if some one held the water for him; and while he was doing this, he said to my brother, "Come close, and wash along with me." Schacabac by this supposed that the Barmecide was fond of fun, and as he himself liked a little raillery, and was not ignorant of the submission the rich expected from the poor, he approached him and did the same.

"Come," said the Barmecide, "now bring us something to eat, and mind you do not keep us waiting." He had no sooner said this than he began, although nothing had been brought to eat, as if he had taken something in his plate, and pretended to put it to his mouth and chew it, calling out at the same time to my brother, "Eat, I entreat you, my guest; make yourself quite at home. Eat, I beg of you; you seem, for a hungry man, to have but a very poor appetite." "Pardon me, my lord," replied Schacabac, imitating his motions at the same time very accurately, "you see I lose no time, and understand my business very well." "What think you of this bread?" said the Barmecide; "don't you find it excellent?" "In truth, my lord," answered my brother, who in fact saw neither bread nor meat, "I never ate anything more white or delicate." "Eat your

fill, then," rejoined the Barmecide; "the slave who made this excellent bread cost me, I assure you, five hundred pieces of gold." Then continuing to praise the female slave who was his baker, and boasting of his bread, which my brother only devoured in idea, he said, "Boy, bring us another dish. Come, my friend," he continued to my brother, though no other boy appeared, "taste this fresh dish, and tell me if you have ever eaten any boiled mutton and barley better dressed than this." "Oh, it is admirable!" answered my brother; "I therefore, you see, help myself very plentifully." "It affords me great pleasure," added the Barmecide, "to see you; and I entreat you not to suffer any of these dishes to be taken away, since you find them so much to your taste."

He presently called for a goose with sweet sauce, and dressed with vinegar, honey, dried raisins, gray peas, and dried figs. This was brought in the same manner as the mutton had been. "This goose is nice and fat," said the Barmecide; "here, take only a wing and a thigh, for you must nurse your appetite, as there are many more things yet to come." In short, he called for many other dishes of different kinds, of which my brother, all the time dying with hunger, continued to pretend to eat. But what he boasted the most of was a lamb that had been fatted with pistachio-nuts, and which he ordered, and was served in the same manner as the other dishes had been. "Now this," said he, "is a dish you never meet with anywhere but at my table, and I wish you to eat your fill of it." As he said this, he pretended to take a piece in his hand, and putting it to my brother's mouth, "Take and eat this," he said, "and you will not think ill of my judgment in boasting of this dish." My brother held his head forward, opened his mouth, pretended

to take the piece, and to chew and swallow it with the greatest pleasure. "I was quite sure," said the Barmecide, "you would think it excellent." "Nothing can be more so," replied Schacabac; "in short, no table can be more deliciously served than yours." "Now bring me the ragout," said the other; "and I do not think you will be less pleased with that than with the lamb. Well, what do you think of it?" "It is wonderful," answered my brother; "we at the same time have in this the flavor of amber, cloves, nutmegs, ginger, pepper, and sweet herbs, and yet they are all so well balanced that the presence of one does not prevent the flavor of the rest. How delicious it is!" "Do justice to it, then," cried the Barmecide, "and eat heartily, I beg. Hullo, boy," cried he, raising his voice, "bring us a fresh ragout!" "Oh, no, if you please," said Schacabac, "for in truth, my lord, I cannot indeed eat any more."

"Let the dessert, then," said the Barmecide, "be served, and the fruit brought." He then waited for a few moments, in order to give the servants time to change the dishes; then, resuming his speech, he said, "Taste these almonds; they are just gathered, and very good." They then both pretended to take the skin off the almonds and eat them. The Barmecide after this invited my brother to partake of many other things. "Here are, you see," said he, "all sorts of fruits, cakes, dried comfits, and preserves; take what you like." Then stretching out his hand as if he was going to give him something, "Take this lozenge," he said, "it is excellent to assist digestion." Schacabac pretended to take and eat it. "Here is no want of musk in this, my lord." "I have these lozenges made at home," said the Barmecide; "and for these, as well as everything else in my house, nothing is spared." He still continued to persuade my

brother to eat. "For a man," he said, "who was almost starving when he came here, you have really eaten hardly anything." "My lord," replied Schacabac, whose jaws were weary of chewing nothing, "I assure you I am so full that I cannot eat a morsel more."

"Well, then," cried the Barmecide, "after having eaten so heartily, it is necessary to drink a little. You have no objection to good wine?" "My lord," replied my brother, "if you will excuse me, I never drink wine, because it is forbidden me." "Oh, you are too scrupulous," said the other; "come, come, do as I do." "To oblige you, then," replied Schacabac, "I will; for I observe you do not like that anything should be omitted in our feast. But as I am not in the habit of drinking wine, I am fearful of being guilty of some fault against good breeding, and even against the respect that is due to you. It is for this reason that I still entreat you to excuse my drinking any wine; I shall be well satisfied with water." "No, no," said the Barmecide, "you must drink wine." At the same time, he ordered some to be brought. But the wine, like the dinner and dessert, never in reality appeared. He then pretended to pour some out, and drank the first glass. After that he poured out another glass for my brother, and presenting it to him, "Come, drink my health," he cried, "and tell me if you think the wine good!"

My brother took the ideal glass, and first holding it up and looking to see if it were of a good bright color, he put it to his nose in order to examine if it had an agreeable perfume; he then, making a most profound reverence to the Barmecide, to show that he took the liberty to drink his health, drank it off, accompanied at the same time with proofs of receiving great pleasure from the draft. "My

lord," he said, "I find this wine excellent; but it does not seem to me quite strong enough." "You have only to speak," replied the other, "if you wish for any stronger. I have various sorts in my cellar. We will see if this will suit you better." He then pretended to pour out some of another sort for himself, and also some for my brother. He did this so frequently that Schacabac, pretending that the wine had got into his head, feigned to be drunk. He raised his hand and gave the Barmecide such a violent blow that he knocked him down. He was going to strike him a second time, but the Barmecide, holding out his hand to avoid the blow, called out, "Are you mad?" My brother then recollecting himself, said, "My lord, you had the goodness to receive your slave into your house, and to make a great feast for him; you ought to have been satisfied with having made him eat, and not compelled him to drink wine. I told you at first that I should be guilty of some disrespect; I am very sorry for it, and ask you a thousand pardons."

He had hardly finished this speech before the Barmecide, instead of putting himself into a great passion and being angry, burst into a violent fit of laughter. "I have searched for a long time," said he, "for a person of your disposition. I not only pardon the blow you have given me, but from this moment I wish to look upon you as one of my friends, and that you shall make no other house than mine your home. You have had the complaisance to accommodate yourself to my humor, and the patience to carry on the pleasantry to the end; but we will now eat in reality."

Having said this, he clapped his hands, when several slaves instantly appeared, whom he ordered to set out the table and serve up dinner. His commands were quickly obeyed, and my brother was now in reality treated with all

the dishes he had before partaken of in idea. As soon as the table was cleared, they brought some wine; and a number of beautiful female slaves, most richly dressed, appeared, and began to sing some pleasant airs to the sound of instruments. Schacabac had in the end every reason to be satisfied with the kindness and civility of the Barmecide, who took a great fancy to him, and treated him in the most familiar manner. He also gave him a handsome dress from his own wardrobe.

—*"History of the Barber's Sixth Brother."*

The Husband and the Parrot

THERE lived once a good man who had a beautiful wife, of whom he was so passionately fond that he could scarcely bear to have her out of his sight. One day, when some particular business obliged him to leave her, he went to a place where they sold all sorts of birds. Here he purchased a parrot, which was not only highly accomplished in the art of talking, but also possessed the rare gift of telling everything that was done in its presence. The husband took it home in a cage to his wife, and begged of her to keep it in her chamber, and take great care of it during his absence. After this he set out on his journey.

On his return he did not fail to interrogate the parrot on what had passed while he was away; and the bird very expertly related a few circumstances which occasioned the husband to reprimand his wife. She supposed that some of her slaves had betrayed her, but they all assured her they were faithful, and agreed in charging the parrot with the crime. Desirous of being convinced of the truth of this

matter, the wife devised a method of quieting the suspicions of her husband, and at the same time of revenging herself on the parrot, if he were the culprit. The next time the husband was absent she ordered one of her slaves during the night to turn a handmill under the bird's cage, another to throw water over it like rain, and a third to wave a looking-glass before the parrot by the light of a candle. The slaves were employed the greater part of the night in doing what their mistress had ordered them, and succeeded to her satisfaction.

The following day, when the husband returned, he again applied to the parrot to be informed of what had taken place. The bird replied, "My dear master, the lightning, the thunder, and the rain have so disturbed me the whole night, that I cannot tell you how much I have suffered."

The husband, who knew there had been no storm that night, became convinced that the parrot did not always relate facts, and that having told an untruth in this particular, he had also deceived him with respect to his wife. Being therefore extremely enraged with it, he took the bird out of the cage and, dashing it on the floor, killed it. He, however, afterward learned from his neighbors that the poor parrot had told no falsehood in reference to his wife's conduct, which made him repent of having destroyed it.

The Glass Merchant's Dream

ALNASCHAR, while he lived with my father, was excessively idle; instead of working for his bread, he was not ashamed of demanding sufficient for his support every eve-

ning, and would live upon it the next day. Our father at last died at a very advanced period of life, and all he left us consisted of seven hundred drams of silver. We divided it equally among us, and each took one hundred for his share. Alnaschar, who had never before been in possession of so much money at a time, found himself very much embarrassed with the disposal of it. He debated a long time in his own mind on this subject, and at last determined to lay it out in the purchase of glasses, bottles, and other glass articles, which he went to get at a large wholesale merchant's. He put the whole of his stock into an open basket, and selected a very small open stall, where he sat down with the basket on the counter, which faced the street. Leaning back in his seat, his feet resting against the edge of the counter, he waited for customers to buy his merchandise.

While he was in this attitude, with his eyes fixed upon his basket, he began to meditate, and in the midst of his reverie he gave vent to the following speech, sufficiently loud for a tailor, who was his neighbor, to hear him:

"This basket," said he, "cost me one hundred drams, and that is all I am worth in the world. In selling its contents by retail, I shall do well if I make two hundred drams; and of these two hundred, which I shall invest again in glassware, I shall make four hundred drams. By continuing this traffic, I shall in process of time amass the sum of four thousand drams. With these four thousand I shall easily make eight. And as soon as I am worth ten thousand I will leave off selling glassware, and turn jeweler. I will then deal in diamonds, pearls, and all sorts of precious stones. When I shall be in possession of as much wealth as I wish, I will purchase a beautiful house, large estates, eunuchs, slaves, and horses; I will entertain handsomely and largely,

and shall make some noise in the world. I will make all the musicians and dancers, both male and female, who live in the city, come to my house. Nor will I remain satisfied till I have realized, if it shall please God, one hundred thousand drams. And when I shall become thus rich, I shall think myself equal to a prince; and I will send and demand the daughter of the grand vizier in marriage, and represent to him that I have heard the most astonishing reports of the beauty, wisdom, wit, and every other good quality of his daughter; and, in short, that I will bestow upon her, the very night of our nuptials, a thousand pieces of gold. If the vizier should be so ill-bred as to refuse me his daughter—though I know that will not be the case—I will go and take her away before his face, and bring her home in spite of him.

"As soon as I shall have married the grand vizier's daughter, I will purchase ten very young and well-made black eunuchs for her. I will dress myself like a prince, and will parade through the town, mounted on a fine horse, the saddle of which shall be of pure gold, and the caparisons of gold stuff, relieved with diamonds and pearls. I will be accompanied by slaves, who shall go both before and behind me, and will thus proceed to the palace of the vizier, with the eyes of all fixed upon me, both nobles and others, who will make me the most profound reverence as I go along. When I shall have dismounted at the grand vizier's, and come to the bottom of the staircase, I will ascend between my people ranged in two rows to the right and left, and the grand vizier, in receiving me for his son-in-law, shall give me his place, and seat himself before me, in order to show me the more respect. If all this should happen, two of my men shall have a purse, each containing one thousand pieces of gold, which I had

ordered them to bring. I will then take one of them, and in presenting it to the grand vizier, will say, 'Behold the thousand pieces of gold which I have promised you on the first night of my marriage.' Then offering him the other, I will add, 'This is not all. To show you that I am a man of my word, and to prove that I give you more than I promise, receive this other purse of equal value.' After such an act as this, my generosity will be the conversation of the whole world.

"I will then return home with the same pomp. My wife will send some officer to compliment me on my visit to her father. I will bestow a beautiful robe of honor on the officer, and send him back with a rich present. If in return she shall wish to make me a present, I will refuse it, and dismiss the person who brings it. I will not, moreover, permit her to leave her apartments upon any account whatever without first consulting me; and whenever I wish to go to her, it shall always be in a way that shall impress her with the greatest respect for me. In short, no house shall be so well regulated as mine. I will always appear magnificently dressed; and whenever I wish to pass the evening with her, I will sit in the most honorable seat, where I will affect a grave and solemn air; nor will I turn my head to the right or left. I will speak but little; and while my wife, beautiful as the moon at the full, presents herself before me in all her splendor, I will pretend not to see her. Her women, who will be standing round her, will say, 'My dear lord and master, behold your spouse, the humblest of your slaves, before you. She is waiting for you to caress her, and is much mortified that you do not deign to take the least notice of her. She is greatly fatigued at standing thus long before you; at least, then, give her leave to sit down.' I will not

answer a word to this speech, at which their surprise and grief will be much augmented. They will then throw themselves at my feet; and after they shall have remained there a considerable time, entreating and begging of me to yield to them, I will at last lift up my head, and casting upon her a sort of negligent, unmeaning glance, will then return to my former state. Thinking, perhaps, that my wife may not either be well or properly dressed, they will lead her back to her room in order to change her habit; and in the meantime I will return to my apartment and put on a more magnificent dress than I had before. They will then return a second time, will address the same speech, and I shall again have the pleasure of not looking at my wife, till they shall have prayed and entreated me as long and earnestly as before. And I will thus begin, on the very first day of my marriage, to teach her how she may expect to be treated during the remainder of her life.

"After the various ceremonies of our nuptials are over," continued Alnaschar, "I will take a purse containing five hundred pieces of gold from the hands of one of the attendants, which I will give to the female attendants, that they may leave me alone with my spouse. As soon as they shall have retired, my wife shall go to bed first. I will immediately follow her, and will be the whole night with my back turned toward her, and will not utter a single syllable. The next morning she will not fail to complain to her mother, the wife of the grand vizier, of my pride and neglect, and this will delight me very much. Her mother will then come to see me, and out of respect take and kiss my hands, and say to me, 'My lord'—for she will not dare to call me son-in-law, through fear of displeasing me by speaking with so much familiarity—'I entreat you, my lord, not to despise

my child in such a manner, nor keep her at such a distance. I assure you she will always endeavor to please you, and I know her whole heart is devoted to you.' Although my mother-in-law shall address me so respectfully and kindly, I will not answer her a word, but remain as grave and solemn as ever. She will then throw herself at my feet, and after kissing them many times, will say, 'My lord, is it possible you suspect the virtue of my daughter? I assure you I have never suffered her to go out of my sight, and you are the first man who has ever seen her face. Forbear to inflict so great a mortification upon her, and do her the favor to look at and speak to her, and thus strengthen her good intention of endeavoring to satisfy and please you in everything.'

"All this shall have no effect upon me; which my mother-in-law observing, she will then take a glass of wine, and putting it into my wife's hand, will say, 'Go and present him this glass of wine yourself; he will not, perhaps, have the cruelty to refuse it from so beautiful a hand.' My wife will then take the glass, and stand up before me, trembling all the time. When she observes that I do not incline myself toward her, and that I persist in taking not the least notice of her, she will address me, with her eyes bathed in tears, in these words: 'My heart, my dear soul, my amiable lord, I conjure you, by the favors which Heaven has so plentifully bestowed upon you, to have the goodness to take this glass of wine from the hand of the humblest of your slaves.' I shall, however, take care neither to look at nor speak to her. 'My charming husband,' she will continue to say, redoubling her tears, and carrying the glass of wine close to my mouth, 'I will not cease entreating you till I obtain the favor of your drinking it.' At last, tired and worn out with her solicitations and prayers, I will throw a most terrible glance at

her, and will give her a good slap on her cheek, at the same time pushing her so violently from me with my foot that she shall fall down at the bottom of the sofa."

My brother was so entirely absorbed in these chimerical visions that he represented the action with his foot as if it were a reality, and he unfortunately struck his basket of glassware so violently that he sent it from the counter into the street, where it was all broken to pieces.

His neighbor, the tailor, who had heard the whole of his extravagant speech, burst out into a fit of laughter when he saw the basket overturned. "Oh, you cruel wretch!" said he to my brother, "ought you not to expire with shame at ill-treating a young wife in such a manner, when she has given you no reason for complaint? You must be hard-hearted indeed to pay no attention to the tears and be insensible to the charms of so amiable a lady. If I were in the place of your father-in-law, the grand vizier, I would order you a hundred strokes with a leathern strap, and send you round the city with the praise you so well merit."

This most unfortunate accident brought my brother to his senses, and knowing that it was his own insupportable pride that had caused it, he beat his breast, tore his garments, and sobbed so violently and loud that all the neighborhood soon assembled; and the people who were going by to midday prayers stopped to inquire the cause of all this bustle; and as this happened to be on a Friday, there were more people than usual. Some pitied Alnaschar, others laughed at his folly. The vanity, however, which he had before possessed was now entirely annihilated, as well as his property.

—*"History of the Barber's Fifth Brother."*

Bakbarah's Visit to the Harem

Bakbarah the Toothless, my second brother, walking one day through the city, met an old woman in a retired street. She thus accosted him: "I have," said she, "a word to say to you, if you will stay a moment." He immediately stopped, and asked her what she wished. "If you have time to go with me," she replied, "I will take you to a most magnificent palace, where you shall see a lady more beautiful than the day. She will receive you with a great deal of pleasure, and will treat you with a collation and excellent wine. I have no occasion, I believe, to say any more." "But is what you tell me," replied my brother, "true?" "I am not given to lying," replied the old woman; "I propose nothing to you but what is the fact. You must, however, pay attention to what I require of you. You must be prudent, speak little, and must comply with everything."

Bakbarah having agreed to the conditions, she walked on before, and he followed her. They arrived at the gate of a large palace, where there were a great number of officers and servants. Some of them wished to stop my brother, but the old woman no sooner spoke to them, than they let him pass. She then turned to my brother, and said, "Remember that the young lady to whose house I have brought you is fond of mildness and modesty; nor does she like being contradicted. If you satisfy her in this, there is no doubt you will obtain whatever you wish." Bakbarah thanked her for this advice, and promised to profit by it.

She then took him into a very beautiful apartment, which formed part of a square building. It corresponded with the

magnificence of the palace; there was a gallery all round it, and in the midst of it a very fine garden. The old woman made him sit down on a sofa that was handsomely furnished, and desired him to wait there a moment, till she went to inform the young lady of his arrival.

As my brother had never before been in so superb a place, he immediately began to observe all the beautiful things that were in sight; and judging of his good fortune by the magnificence he beheld, he could hardly contain his joy. He almost immediately heard a great noise, which came from a long troop of slaves who were enjoying themselves, and came toward him, bursting out at the same time into violent fits of laughter. In the midst of them he perceived a young lady of most extraordinary beauty, whom he easily discovered to be their mistress, by the attention they paid her. Bakbarah, who expected merely a private conversation with the lady, was very much surprised at the arrival of so large a company. In the meantime the slaves, putting on a serious air, approached him; and when the young lady was near the sofa, my brother, who had risen up, made a most profound reverence. She took the seat of honor, and then, having requested him to resume his, she said to him, in a smiling manner, "I am delighted to see you, and wish you everything you can yourself desire." "Madam," replied Bakbarah, "I cannot wish a greater honor than that of appearing before you." "You seem to me," she replied, "of so good-humored a disposition, that we shall pass our time very agreeably together."

She immediately ordered a collation to be served up, and they covered the table with baskets of various fruits and sweetmeats. She then sat down at the table along with my brother and the slaves. As it happened that he was placed

directly opposite to her, she observed, as soon as he opened his mouth to eat, he had no teeth; she remarked this to her slaves, and they all laughed immoderately at it. Bakbarah, who from time to time raised his head to look at the lady, and saw that she was laughing, imagined it was from the pleasure she felt at being in his company, and flattered himself, therefore, that she would soon order the slaves to retire, and that he should enjoy her conversation in private. The lady easily guessed his thoughts, and took a pleasure in continuing a delusion which seemed so agreeable to him: she said a thousand soft, tender things, and presented the best of everything to him with her own hand.

When the collation was finished, she arose from table; ten slaves instantly took some musical instruments and began to play and sing, the others to dance. In order to make himself the more agreeable, my brother also began dancing, and the young lady herself partook of the amusement. After they had danced for some time, they all sat down to take breath. The lady ordered them to bring her a glass of wine, then cast a smile at my brother, to intimate that she was going to drink his health. He instantly rose up, and stood while she drank. As soon as she had finished, instead of returning the glass, she had it filled again, and presented it to my brother, that he might pledge her.

Bakbarah took the glass, and in receiving it from the young lady he kissed her hand, then drank to her, standing the whole time, to show his gratitude for the favor she had done him. After this the young lady made him sit down by her side, and began to give him signs of affection. She put her arm round his neck, and frequently gave him gentle pats with her hand. Delighted with these favors, he thought himself the happiest man in the world; he also was tempted

to begin to play in the same manner with this charming creature, but he durst not take this liberty before the slaves, who had their eyes upon him, and who continued to laugh at this trifling. The young lady still kept giving him such gentle taps, till at last she began to apply them so forcibly that he grew angry at it. He reddened, and got up to sit farther from so rude a playfellow. At this moment the old woman, who had brought my brother there, looked at him in such a way as to make him understand that he was wrong, and had forgotten the advice she had before given him. He acknowledged his fault, and, to repair it, he again approached the young lady, pretending that he had not gone to a distance through anger. She then took hold of him by the arm, and drew him toward her, making him again sit down close by her, and continuing to bestow a thousand pretended caresses on him. Her slaves, whose only aim was to divert her, began to take a part in the sport. One of them gave poor Bakbarah a fillip on the nose with all her strength, another pulled his ears almost off, while the rest kept giving him slaps, which passed the limits of raillery and fun.

My brother bore all this with the most exemplary patience; he even affected an air of gaiety, and looked at the old woman with a forced smile. "You were right," said he, "when you said that I should find a very fine, agreeable, and charming young lady. How much am I obliged to you for it!" "Oh, this is nothing yet," replied the old woman; "let her alone, and you will see very different things by and by." The young lady then spoke. "You are a fine man," said she to my brother, "and I am delighted at finding in you so much kindness and complaisance toward all my little fooleries, and that you possess a disposition so

conformable to mine." "Madam," replied Bakbarah, ravished with this speech, "I am no longer myself, but am entirely at your disposal; you have full power to do with me as you please." "You afford me the greatest delight," added the lady, "by showing so much submission to my inclination. I am perfectly satisfied with you, and I wish that you should be equally so with me. Bring," cried she to the attendants, "perfumes and rose-water!" At these words two slaves went out and instantly returned, one with a silver vase, in which there was exquisite aloe-wood, with which she perfumed him, and the other with rose-water, which she sprinkled over his face and hands. My brother could not contain himself for joy at seeing himself so handsomely and honorably treated.

When this ceremony was finished, the young lady commanded the slaves who had before sung and played to recommence their concert. They obeyed; and while this was going on, the lady called another slave, and ordered her to take my brother with her, saying, "You know what to do; and when you have finished, return with him to me." Bakbarah, who heard this order given, immediately got up, and going toward the old woman, who had also risen to accompany the slave, he requested her to tell him what they wished him to do. "Our mistress," replied she, in a whisper, "is extremely curious, and she wishes to see how you would look disguised as a female; this slave, therefore, has orders to take you with her, to paint your eyebrows, shave your mustachios, and dress you like a woman." "You may paint my eyebrows," said my brother, "as much as you please; to that I readily agree, because I can wash them again; but as to shaving me, that, mind you, I will by no means suffer. How do you think I dare appear without my mustachios?"

"Take care," answered the woman, "how you oppose anything that is required of you. You will quite spoil your fortune, which is going on as prosperously as possible. She loves you, and wishes to make you happy. Will you, for the sake of a paltry mustachio, forego the most delicious favors any man can possibly enjoy?"

Bakbarah at length yielded to the old woman's arguments, and without saying another word, he suffered the slave to conduct him to an apartment, where they painted his eyebrows red. They shaved his mustachios, and were absolutely going to shave his beard. But the easiness of my brother's temper did not carry him quite so far as to suffer that. "Not a single stroke," he exclaimed, "shall you take at my beard!" The slave represented to him that it was of no use to have cut off his mustachios if he would not also agree to lose his beard; that a hairy countenance did not at all coincide with the dress of a woman; and that she was astonished that a man, who was on the very point of possessing the most beautiful woman in Bagdad, should care for his beard. The old woman also joined with the slave, and added fresh reasons; she threatened my brother with being quite in disgrace with her mistress. In short, she said so much that he at last permitted them to do what they wished.

As soon as they had dressed him like a woman, they brought him back to the young lady, who burst into so violent a fit of laughter at the sight of him, that she fell down on the sofa on which she was sitting. The slaves all began to clap their hands, so that my brother was put quite out of countenance. The young lady then got up, and continuing to laugh all the time, said, "After the complaisance you have shown to me, I should be guilty of a crime not

to bestow my whole heart upon you; but it is necessary that you should do one thing more for love of me: it is only to dance before me as you are." He obeyed; and the young lady and the slaves danced with him, laughing all the while as if they were crazy. After they had danced for some time, they all threw themselves upon the poor wretch, and gave him so many blows, both with their hands and feet, that he fell down almost fainting. The old woman came to his assistance, and without giving him time to be angry at such ill treatment, she whispered in his ear, "Console yourself, for you are now arrived at the conclusion of your sufferings, and are about to receive the reward for them. You have only one thing more to do," added she, "and that is a mere trifle. You must know that my mistress makes it her custom, whenever she has drunk a little, as she has done to-day, not to suffer any one she loves to come near her, unless they are stripped to their shirt. When they are in this situation, she takes advantage of a short distance, and begins running before them through the gallery, and from room to room, till they have caught her. This is one of her fancies. Now, at whatever distance from you she may start, you, who are so light and active, can easily overtake her. Undress yourself quickly, therefore, and remain in your shirt, and do not make any difficulty about it."

My brother had already carried his complying humor too far to stop at this. The young lady at the same time took off her outer robe, in order to run with greater ease. When they were both ready to begin the race, the lady took the advantage of about twenty paces, and then started with wonderful celerity. My brother followed her with all his strength, but not without exciting the risibility of the slaves, who kept clapping their hands all the time. The young lady,

instead of losing any of the advantage she had first taken, kept continually gaining ground of my brother. She ran round the gallery two or three times, then turned off down a long dark passage, where she saved herself by a turn of which my brother was ignorant. Bakbarah, who kept constantly following her, lost sight of her in this passage, and he was also obliged to run much slower, because it was so dark. He at last perceived a light, toward which he made all possible haste; he went out through a door which was instantly shut upon him.

You may easily imagine what was his astonishment at finding himself in the middle of a street inhabited by curriers. Nor were they less surprised at seeing him in his shirt, his eyebrows painted red, and without either beard or mustachios. They began to clap their hands, to hoot at him; and some even ran after him, and kept lashing him with strips of their leather. They then stopped him, and set him on an ass, which they accidentally met with, and led him through the city, exposed to the laughter and shouts of the mob.

To complete his misfortune, they led him through the street where the judge of the police court lived, and this magistrate immediately sent to inquire the cause of the uproar. The curriers informed him that they saw my brother, exactly in the state he then was, come out of the gate leading to the apartments of the women belonging to the grand vizier, which opened into their street. The judge then ordered the unfortunate Bakbarah, upon the spot, to receive a hundred strokes on the soles of his feet, to be conducted without the city, and forbade him ever to enter it again.—"*History of the Barber's Second Brother.*"

Nabegat Ben Jaid

Temper

Yes, Leila, I swore by the fire of thine eyes
I ne'er could a sweetness unvaried endure;
The bubbles of spirit, that sparkling arise,
Forbid life to stagnate, and render it pure.

But yet, my dear maid, though thy spirit's my pride,
I'd wish for some sweetness to temper the bowl;
If life ne'er be suffered to rest or subside,
It may not be flat, but I fear 'twill be foul.

The Caliph Yezid

Answer to a Reproach for Drunkenness

Must, then, my failings from the shaft
Of anger ne'er escape?
And dost thou storm because I've quaffed
The water of the grape?

That I can thus from wine be driv'n,
Thou surely ne'er canst think—
Another reason thou hast giv'n
Why I resolve to drink.

'Twas sweet the flowing cup to seize,
'Tis sweet thy rage to see;
And first I drink myself to please,
And next, to anger thee.

Mashdud—Extempore Poet

The Monks of Khabbet

Tenants of yon hallowed fane,
Let me your devotions share;
There unceasing raptures reign—
None are ever sober there.

Crowded gardens, festive bowers,
Ne'er shall claim a thought of mine;
You can give in Khabbet's towers
Purer joys and brighter wine.

Though your pallid faces prove
How you nightly vigils keep,
'Tis but that you ever love
Flowing goblets more than sleep.

Though your eyeballs, dim and sunk,
Stream in penitential guise,
'Tis but that the wine you've drunk
Bubbles over from your eyes.

Ali Ben Abd

To an Inconsistent Fair

When I sent you some melons, you cried out with scorn,
"They ought to be heavy and wrinkled and yellow!"
When I offered myself, whom those graces adorn,
You flouted, and called me an ugly old fellow.

Arabian Riddle

Fire

The loftiest cedars I can eat,
Yet neither paunch nor mouth have I;
I storm whene'er you give me meat,
Whene'er you give me drink, I die.

Nasir-Ed-Din

Jests and Pranks

At a very late hour of the night the master (Nasir-ed-din) issued forth from his house, and wandered about the streets of the town. He was met by a captain of the police, who thus accosted him:

"Sir, why do you walk abroad at this unseemly hour?"

To which the master replied:

"My sleep having flown, I came out to look for it."

One day the master bought a sheep's lung, intending to consume it at supper. On the way home he met a friend, who asked him how he would prepare the lung.

"I shall cook it," said the master, "in the usual way."

"Do not so," urged his friend, "but let me instruct you in a method to make the dish truly palatable."

But after being instructed, the master shook his head, saying:

"All this I cannot remember. Will you not, in your kindness, aid my memory by writing on paper what I am to do?"

So the friend complied, and the master, thanking him, bade him good day, and resumed his homeward road.

Musing on the delicate repast in store for him, he did not perceive a raven which was hovering above his footsteps. Suddenly the raven swooped down and tore the lung from his hand.

"Nay," exclaimed the master, "you will not enjoy the lung, for you have not the receipt!"

Another day he was requested the loan of his ass. He excused himself, saying:

"I have none."

Just then the ass brayed aloud in the stable, and to the remonstrance offered the master replied:

"I am astonished indeed that you put no faith in my denial, but rather believe the words of an ass."

The master was caressing a calf, when the animal kicked at him and ran away. Thereupon he took a stick and beat the calf's mother. On being challenged why he thus punished an innocent cow, the master explained that the calf's mother was at fault for having taught it to kick.

The master and his wife were lying awake in bed one night. She wanted him to light the candle, saying that it stood at the right hand of the bed. To which he replied:

"Woman, how shall I tell, in the dark, which is the right hand and which is the left?"

The master's wife being a shrew, upon the occasion of a dispute she ended it by giving her spouse a kick, so that he lost his balance and rolled down the stairs. Hearing the tumult, the neighbors hastened to find out the cause, and inquired of the master what had taken place.

"My wife and I had words between us," he informed them.

"That may well be, but whence arose that loud noise as of great and rapid thumping?"

"My wife became impatient in the argument, and flung my cloak down-stairs."

"But a cloak, even if folded tightly, would make no such loud noise as we heard."

"Then, since you drive me to it," said the master, "I confess that I was inside the cloak."

Having lost his ass, the master went forth in search of it. During the search he was seen to raise his eyes to heaven, while his lips uttered the words, "Allah be praised!"

On being asked what reason he had to offer up thanks for such a visitation, he answered:

"I am grateful because I was not riding the ass, for then I must have been lost too."

Straying into a vegetable garden one day, the master saw that the vegetables were good, and plucked one here and there, dropping them into his wallet. The gardener, perceiving the master thus occupied, addressed himself to him, and the following talk ensued:

Gardener. Who are you?

Master. That is known to me, but evidently not to you.

Gardener. Then, why are you here?

Master. By chance.

Gardener. I mean, how came you here?

Master. By accident.

Gardener. Say now, without further ado, what brought you here?

Master. The will of Allah.

Gardener. How so?

Master. It must have been the will of Allah, since Allah is the governor of all nature, and nature is the cause of my presence in this garden. Could I resist the forces of nature?

Gardener. Bandy no words with me, but explain what force of nature it was that brought you hither to pluck my vegetables.

Master. The wind came, and, blowing mightily, carried me into this garden.

Gardener. And did the wind tear up my vegetables?

Master. Nay, friend; but the wind blew me so about that, to save myself, I clutched at every stalk which came near my hand, and thus, with each fresh gust of wind that bore me off, a vegetable remained in my grasp.

Gardener. A fine story, forsooth!

Master. Yes, a truly fine story, friend.

Gardener. And, now, tell me how the vegetables got into your wallet.

Master. Ah, that is really the chief question! Let us both spend the rest of the day in surmising how the vegetables might have got into my wallet.

Mirza Fet-Ali

The Sieve

The VIZIER *and* CIBA, *his oldest Wife.*

Ciba. Pray give your commands, that I may know what it is your pleasure to desire for to-night's supper.

Viz. Viper! You have stuffed me with almonds to such a degree that it will be a month before I am able to swallow another mouthful! (*Accidentally stamps on the edge of a sieve lying upon the floor. The sieve turns up sharply, and strikes his shin-bone.*) Hu-hu! My leg! My leg! The infernal fools! That cursed sieve! Yes, what is that sieve doing here, you daughter of Belial?

Ciba. How should I know what it is doing here? Whenever you catch a glimpse of me you begin to bawl and quarrel immediately. Your presents go to others; I get all the abuse. (*Exit.*)

Viz. (*shouts*). Haidar!

Enter HAIDAR.

Viz. How in the name of all the evil spirits did that sieve get into the middle of this room?

Haid. I will tell your Excellency. This morning, at daybreak, while I was sweeping here, Kerim, the groom, came in. He had a sieve in his hand, and stopped to speak to me. He must have forgotten the sieve, and left it behind.

Viz. Then call in the camel of a groom, so that I may question him. (*Exit* HAIDAR.) What business had the

groom here? What business has a sieve here? I am pursued by ill-luck to-day, wherever I go. As soon as I put my foot into this miserable room something goes wrong.

Enter HAIDAR *with* KERIM.

Viz. (*in a fury*). Kerim, you lout! You scoundrel! How dare you come into this room? The stable is the place for you! How dare you show your face here, you pig! And what were you doing here this morning?

Ker. Your Excellency, I came in for a moment to ask Haidar if your Excellency wished to ride out to-day. When I had asked him this, I at once took my departure.

Viz. How did your sieve get here?

Ker. I had been sifting oats for the horses, and I left it by mistake.

Viz. Why did you not come back for it?

Ker. I did not remember where I had left it. I looked for it everywhere in vain.

Viz. Then where was your head, you thief? (*To* HAIDAR.) Go for Beshir, the steward, and bring back a bundle of canes and the stocks. Bring three servants too.

(*Exit* HAIDAR.)

Ker. Mercy! In the name of Allah, mercy!

Viz. May your own breath suffocate you, son of a dog!

Ker. (*moaning*). Oh, your Excellency, I am your willing sacrifice! I made a mistake. I acknowledge my sin. But, your Excellency, by your father's tombstone, I beseech you to forgive me! Oh, do forgive me! I know how black my guilt is, but grant me your pardon, and by the heads of my parents I swear never to enter this room again as long as I live!

Viz. May you suffocate, you camel!

Enter HAIDAR, *with* BESHIR *and* SERVANTS.

Viz. Throw down the steward, and put his feet into the stocks! (HAIDAR *and* SERVANTS *execute this order.*)

Viz. Now, beat him. (*Two* SERVANTS *beat* BESHIR.)

Besh. Oh! Oh! Your Excellency, I am your faithful slave! But what have I done to be punished?

Viz. (*pointing to the sieve*). That sieve—what is it doing in my room?

Besh. What sieve, your Excellency?

Viz. After you have had your beating I will tell you what sieve I mean.—Go on with the canes!

(*Two* SERVANTS *continue beating* BESHIR.)

Besh. Oh! Mercy! Justice! I am your faithful slave, Excellency! But what have I done? I am your willing sacrifice. Only vouchsafe to impart to me in what manner I have transgressed! Kill me afterward, if I deserve it!

Viz. (*to the* SERVANTS). Stop!—Beshir, listen to your offense. You have neglected to inform my servants of their duties. Every one in this house is under your orders. It is for you to instruct them all in the proper fulfilment of their offices, and to see that you are decently obeyed. It is you who are answerable for the state of my house. The place of a groom, for instance, is in the stable, and nowhere else, and his sieves are of no use to me in my apartments. But to-day Kerim was in this room with a sieve, and went away leaving it behind him. Not having foreseen such an event, I stepped on the sieve, and it hurt my leg so badly that I can scarcely move. If I, the vizier of a province, carry the burden of its affairs about with me wherever I go, why cannot a camel like you conduct the affairs of a single house, and manage its servants?

Besh. Allah has created your Excellency a great sage, and how should one as lowly as I venture to compare myself against you?

Viz. (*to the* SERVANTS). Beat him!

Besh. Oh, your Excellency, I am your willing sacrifice! But have mercy upon me this once! It shall never happen again!

Viz. (*to the* SERVANTS). Stop!—Well, then, since you promise, I will forgive you. But remember, if ever I find another sieve in my room, you shall die the death! Do you understand?

Besh. (*after being released*). Yes, your Excellency, count upon my word.

Viz. Then you may go.

Ker. (*aside*). Allah be praised!

—*"The Vizier of Lenkoran."*

Omar Khayyam

The Pots Criticize the Potter

As, under cover of departing day,
Slunk hunger-stricken Ramazan away,
  Once more within the Potter's house alone
I stood, surrounded by the shapes of clay.

Shapes of all sorts and sizes, great and small,
That stood along the floor and by the wall;
  And some loquacious vessels were, and some
Listened, perhaps, but never talked at all.

Said one among them: "Surely not in vain
My substance of the common earth was ta'en,
  And to this figure molded to be broke,
Or trampled back to shapeless earth again!"

Then said a second: "Ne'er a peevish boy
Would break the bowl from which he drank in joy;
  And He that with His hand the vessel made,
Will surely not in after-wrath destroy."

After a momentary silence spake
Some vessel of a more ungainly make:
  "They sneer at me for leaning all awry;
What! did the hand, then, of the Potter shake?"

Omar Khayyam

Whereat some one of the loquacious lot—
I think a Sufi pipkin—waking hot:
"All this of Pot and Potter! Tell me, then,
Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?"

"Why," said another, "some there are who tell
Of One who threatens he will toss to hell
The luckless Pots he marr'd in making! Pish!
He's a good fellow, and 'twill all be well!"

—*Quatrains* (*Rubaiyat*).

Firdausi

Epigram on Sultan Mahmoud

'Tis said our monarch's liberal mind
Is like the ocean unconfined.
Happy are they who prove it so;
'Tis not for me that fact to know:
I've plunged within its waves, 'tis true,
But not a single pearl could view.

Sadi

Discomfort Better than Drowning

A KING was embarked along with a Persian boy slave on board a ship. The boy had never been at sea nor experienced the inconvenience of a ship. He set up a weeping and wailing, and all his limbs were in a state of trepidation; and however much they soothed him, he was not to be pacified. The king's pleasure-party was disconcerted by him; but there was no help for it. On board that ship there was a physician. He said to the king, "If you will order it, I can manage to silence him." The king replied, "It will be an act of great favor."

The physician so directed that they threw the boy into the sea, and after he had plunged repeatedly, they seized him by the hair of the head and drew him close to the ship, when he clung with both hands to the rudder, and, scrambling upon the deck, slunk into a corner and sat down quiet. The king, pleased with what he saw, said, "What art is there in this?" The boy replied that originally he had not experienced the danger of being drowned, and undervalued the safety of being in a ship. In like manner, a person is aware of the preciousness of health when he is overtaken with the calamity of sickness.

A barley loaf of bread has, oh, epicure, no relish for thee. To the houris, or nymphs of paradise, purgatory would be a hell. Ask the inmates of hell whether purgatory is not paradise.

There is a distinction between the man that folds his mis-

tress in his arms and him whose two eyes are fixed on the door expecting her.—"The Rose Garden" (Gulistan).

The Strict Schoolmaster and the Mild

In the west of Africa I saw a schoolmaster of a sour aspect and bitter speech, crabbed, misanthropic, and intemperate, insomuch that the sight of him would derange the ecstasies of the orthodox, and his manner of reading the Koran cast a gloom over the minds of the pious. A number of handsome boys and lovely virgins were subject to his despotic sway; they had neither the permission of a smile nor the option of a word, for this moment he would smite the silver cheek of one of them with his hand, and the next put the crystalline legs of another in the stocks. In short, their parents, I heard, were made aware of a part of his angry violence, and beat and drove him from his charge.

They made over his school to a peaceable creature, so pious, meek, simple, and good-natured that he never spoke till forced to do so, nor would he utter a word that could offend anybody. The children forgot that awe in which they had held their first master, and remarking the angelic disposition of their second master, they became one after another as wicked as devils. Relying on his clemency, they would so neglect their studies as to pass most part of their time at play, and break the tablets of their unfinished tasks over each other's heads.

When the schoolmaster relaxes in his discipline, the children will stop to play at marbles in the market-place.

A fortnight after I passed by the gate of that mosque,

and saw the first schoolmaster, with whom they had been obliged to make friends and to restore him to his place. I was in truth offended, and calling on God to witness, asked, saying, "Why have they again made a devil the preceptor of angels?"

A facetious old gentleman, who had seen much of life, listened to me, and replied, "A king sent his son to school, and hung a tablet of silver round his neck. On the face of that tablet he had had written in golden letters, 'The severity of the master is more useful than the indulgence of the father.'"—"*The Rose Garden*" (*Gulistan*).

Hatefulness of Old Husbands

An old man married a young virgin. He adorned the bridal chamber with flowers, seated himself with her in private, and riveted his heart and eyes upon her. Many a long night he would lie awake and indulge in pleasantries and jests, in order to remove any coyness on her part, and encourage familiarity. One of those nights he addressed her thus:

"Lofty fortune was your friend, and the eye of your prosperity broad awake, when you fell into the society of such an old gentleman as I am, being of mature judgment, well-bred, worldly experienced, inured to the vicissitudes of heat and cold, and practised in the goods and evils of life, who can appreciate the rights of good-fellowship and fulfil the duties of loving attachment and is kind and affable, sweet-spoken, and cheerful. I will treat you with affection, as far as I can, and if you deal with me unkindly, I will not

be unkind in return. *If, like a parrot, thy food be sugar, I will devote my sweet life for thy nourishment.* And you did not become the victim of a rude, conceited, rash, and headstrong youth, who one moment gratifies his lust, and the next has a fresh object; who every night shifts his abode, and every day changes his mistress. Young men are lively and handsome, but they keep good faith with nobody. *Expect not constancy from nightingales, who will every moment serenade a fresh rose.* Whereas my class of seniors regulate their lives by good breeding and sense, and are not deluded by youthful ignorance."

Court the society of a superior, and make much of the opportunity; for in the company of an equal thy good fortune must decline.

The old man spoke a great deal in this style, and thought that he had caught her heart in his snare, and made sure of her as his prey, when she suddenly drew a cold sigh from the bottom of a much-afflicted bosom, and answered:

"All this speech which you have delivered has not, in the scale of my judgment, the weight of that one sentence which I have heard of my nurse, that it were better to plant a spear in a young maiden's side than to lay her by an old man in bed. Much contention and strife will arise in that house where the wife shall get dissatisfied with her husband."

Unable to rise without the help of a staff, how can an old man stir the staff of life?

In short, there being no prospect of concord, they agreed to separate. After lapse of the period prescribed by the law, she united in wedlock with a young man of an ill-tempered and sullen disposition, and in very narrow circumstances, so that she endured much tyranny and violence, penury and

hardship. Yet she was thus offering up thanksgivings for the Almighty's goodness, and saying:

"Praised be God that I have escaped from such hell-torment, and secured a blessing so permanent. With all this violence and impetuosity of temper, I bear with his caprice, because he is handsome. It were better for me to burn with him in hell-fire than to dwell in paradise with the other."

The smell of an onion from the mouth of the lovely is sweeter than that of a rose in the hand of the ugly.

—*"The Rose Garden"* (*Gulistan*).

Jalaladdin Rumi

The Sick Schoolmaster

The boys of a certain school were tired of their teacher, as he was very strict in the exaction of diligence; so they consulted together for the best means of getting rid of him for a time. Said they, "Why does he not fall ill, so that he may be obliged to be away from school, and we be released from confinement and work? Alas! he stands as firm as a rock." One of them, who was wiser than the rest, suggested this plan: "I shall go to the teacher, and ask him why he looks so pale, saying, 'May it turn out well! But your face has not its usual color. Is it due to the weather, or to fever?' This will create some alarm in his mind. Then you, brother," he continued, turning to another boy, "must assist me by using similar words. When you come into the schoolroom you must say to the teacher, 'I hope, sir, you are well.' This will tend to increase his apprehension, even though in a slight degree; and you know that even slight doubts are often enough to drive a man mad. Then a third, a fourth, and a fifth boy must one after another express his sympathy in similar words, till at last, when thirty boys successively have given expression to words of like nature, the teacher's apprehension will be confirmed."

The boys praised his ingenuity, and wished each other success; and they bound themselves by solemn promises not to shirk doing what was expected of them. Then the first boy bade them take oaths of secrecy, lest some telltale should let the matter out.

Next morning the boys came to school in a cheerful mood, having resolved on adopting the foregoing plan. They all stood outside the schoolhouse, waiting for the arrival of the friend who had helped them in the time of need—since it was he who had originated the plan: it is the head that is the governor of the legs. The first boy arrived, entered the schoolroom, and greeted the teacher with "I hope you are well, sir, but the color of your face is very pale."

"Nonsense!" said the teacher; "there is nothing the matter with me. Go and take your seat." But inwardly he was somewhat apprehensive. Another boy came in, and in similar words greeted the teacher, whose misgivings were thereby somewhat increased. And so on, one boy after another greeted him, till his worst apprehensions seemed to be confirmed, and he was in great anxiety regarding the state of his health.

He got enraged at his wife. "Her love for me is waning," he thought. "I am in this bad state of health, and she did not even ask what was the matter with me. She did not draw my attention to the color of my face. Perhaps she is not unwilling that I should die."

Full of such thoughts, he came to his home, followed by the boys, and flung open the door. His wife exclaimed, "I hope nothing is the matter with you! Why have you returned so soon?"

"Are you blind?" he answered. "Look at the color of my face, and at my condition! Even strangers show sympathetic alarm about my health."

"Well, I see nothing wrong," said the wife. "You must be laboring under some senseless delusion."

"Woman," he rejoined impatiently, "you are most obstinate! Can you not perceive the altered hue of my face and

the shivering of my body? Go and get my bed made, that I may lie down, for my head is dizzy."

The bed was prepared, and the teacher lay down on it, giving vent to sighs and groans. The boys he ordered to sit there and read the lessons, which they did with much vexation. They said to themselves, "We did so much to be free, and still we are in confinement. The foundation was not well laid; we are bad architects. Some other plan must now be adopted, so that we may be rid of this annoyance."

The clever boy who had instigated the first plot advised the others to read their lessons very loudly; and when they did so, he said, in a tone to be overheard by the teacher, "Boys, your voices disturb our teacher. Loud voices will only increase his headache. Is it proper that he should be made to suffer pain for the sake of the trifling fees he gets from us?"

The teacher said, "He is right. Boys, you may go. My headache has increased. Be off with you!" And the boys scampered away home as eagerly as birds fly toward a spot where they see grain.

The mothers of the boys, on seeing them return, got angry, and thus challenged them, "This is the time for you to learn writing, and you are engaged in play. This is the time for acquiring knowledge, and you fly from your books and your teacher."

The boys urged that it was no fault of theirs, and that they were in no way to blame, for, by the decree of fate, their teacher had become very ill.

The mothers, disbelieving, said, "This is all deceit and falsehood. You would not scruple to tell a hundred lies to get a little quantity of buttermilk. To-morrow morning we shall go to the teacher's house, and shall ascertain what truth there is in your assertions."

So the next morning the mothers went to visit the teacher, whom they found lying in bed like a very sick person. He had perspired freely, owing to his having covered himself with blankets. His head was bandaged, and his face was covered with a kerchief. He was groaning in a feeble voice.

The ladies expressed their sympathy, hoped his headache was getting less, and swore by his soul that they had been unaware until quite lately that he was so ill.

"I, too," said the teacher, "was unaware of my illness. It was through those little bastards that I learned of it."

—"*Stories in Rime*" (*Masnavi*).

The Invalid and his Deaf Visitor

A DEAF man was informed that a neighbor of his was ill, so he resolved upon going to see him. "But," said he to himself, "owing to my deafness I shall not be able to catch the words of the sick man, whose voice must be very feeble at this time. However, go I must. When I see his lips moving I shall be able to make a reasonably good conjecture of what he is saying. When I ask him, 'How are you, oh, my afflicted friend?' he will probably reply, 'I am well,' or 'I am better.' I shall then say, 'Thanks be to God! Tell me, what have you taken for food?' He will probably mention some liquid food or gruel. I shall then wish that the food may agree with him, and shall ask him the name of the physician under whose treatment he is. On his naming the man, I shall say, 'He is a skilful leech. Since it is he who is attending upon you, you will soon be well. I have had experience of him. Wherever he goes, his patients very soon recover.'"

So the deaf man, having prepared himself for the visit, went to the invalid's bedside, and sat down near the pillow. Then, rubbing his hands together with assumed cheerfulness, he inquired, "How are you?" "I am dying," replied the patient. "Thanks be to God!" rejoined the deaf man.

The sick man was troubled in his heart, and said to himself, "What kind of thanksgiving is this? Surely he must be an enemy of mine!"—little thinking that his visitor's remark was but the result of wrong conjecture.

"What have you been eating?" was the next question; to which the reply was, "Poison!" "May it agree with you," was the wish expressed by the deaf man, which only increased the other's vexation.

"And pray, who is your physician?" again asked the visitor. "Azrael, the Angel of Death. And now, begone with you!" growled the invalid. "Oh, is he?" pursued the deaf man. "Then you ought to rejoice, for he is a man of auspicious footsteps. I saw him only just now, and asked him to devote to you his best possible attention."

With these words he bade the sick man good-by, and withdrew, rejoicing that he had satisfactorily performed a neighborly duty. Meanwhile, the other man was angrily muttering to himself, "This fellow is an implacable foe of mine. I did not know his heart was so full of malignity."

—*"Stories in Rime"* (*Masnavi*).

Old Age—Dialogue

Old Man. I am in sore trouble owing to my brain.
Physician. The weakness of the brain is due to old age.
Old Man. Dark spots are floating before my eyes.

Physician. That, too, comes from old age, oh, venerable sheikh!

Old Man. My back aches very much.

Physician. The result of old age, oh, lean sheikh!

Old Man. No food that I take agrees with me.

Physician. The failure of the digestive organs is also due to old age.

Old Man. I am afflicted with hard breathing.

Physician. Yes, the breathing ought to be affected in that manner. When old age comes, it brings a hundred complaints in its train.

Old Man. My legs are getting feeble, and I am unable to walk much.

Physician. It is nothing but old age which obliges you to sit in a corner.

Old Man. My back has become bent like a bow.

Physician. This trouble is merely the consequence of old age.

Old Man. My eyesight is quite dim, oh, sage physician!

Physician. Nothing but old age, oh, wise man!

Old Man. Oh, you idiot, always harping on the same theme! Is this all you know of the science of medicine? Fool, does not your reason tell you that God has assigned a remedy to every ailment? You are a stupid ass, and with your paltry stock of learning are still fumbling in the mire!

Physician. Oh, you dotard past sixty, know, then, that even this rage and fury is due to old age!

Abu-Ishak

Parody on Hafiz

Hafiz	Abu-Ishak
Will those who can transmute dust into gold by looking at it ever give a sidelong glance at us?	Will those who sell cooked sheep's-head give us a sidelong glance, when they open their pots in the morning?
The beauteous Turk, who is the cause of death to her lovers, has to-day gone forth intoxicated. Let us see from whose eyes the heart's blood shall begin to flow.	The cook has to-day bought onions for giving a relish to minced meat. Let us see, now, from whose eyes tears shall begin to flow.
I have a yearning for seclusion and peace. But, oh! those narcissus-like eyes! The commotion they cause me is inexpressible!	I have an inclination for abstinent living and observing fasts. But, oh! in what a tempting way doth the roasted lamb wink at me!
No one should give up his heart and his religion in the expectation of faithfulness from his sweetheart. My having done so has resulted to me in lifelong repentance.	No one should partake of sauce to accompany sweetened rice colored with saffron. My having done so has given me cause for infinite regret.

Do-Pyazah

Definitions

Angel. A hidden telltale.

King. The idlest man in the country.

Minister of State. The target for the arrows of the sighs of the oppressed.

Flatterer. One who drives a profitable trade.

Lawyer. One ready to tell any lie.

Fool. An official, for instance, who is honest.

Physician. The herald of death.

Widow. A woman in the habit of praising her husband when he is gone.

Poet. A proud beggar.

Mirror. One that laughs at you to your face.

Bribe. The resource of him who knows he has a bad cause.

National Calamity. A ruler who cares for nothing but the pleasures of the harem.

Salutation. A polite hint to others to get up and greet you with respect.

Priest Calling to Prayers. A disturber of the indolent.

Faithful Friend. Money.

Truthful Man. One who is regarded as an enemy by every one.

Silence. Half consent.

Service. Selling one's independence.

Hunting. The occupation of those who have no work to do.

Mother-in-Law. A spy domiciled in your house.

Debtor. An ass in a quagmire.

Liar. A person making frequent use of the expression, "I swear to God it is true!"

Guest. One in your house who is impatient to hear the dishes clatter.

Poverty. The consequence of marriage.

Hunger. Something which falls to the lot of those out of employment.

Soporific. Reading the verses of a dull poet.

Druggist. One who wishes everybody to be ill.

Learned Man. One who does not know how to earn his livelihood.

Miser's Eye. A vessel which is never full.

Diving for an Egg—Anecdote

The Emperor Akbar was one day sitting with his attendants in the garden of the palace, close to a large cistern full of water. At the suggestion of a courtier, the emperor commanded some of the men present to procure an egg each, and to place it in the cistern in such a manner that it could easily be found when searched for.

Soon after the order had been obeyed, the Mollah Do-pyazah came to this spot. Akbar then turned to his attendants, saying he had dreamed the night before that there were eggs in the cistern, and that all who were his faithful servants had dived in, and brought out an egg. Whereupon the attendants one by one dived into the water, each one issuing forth with an egg in his hand. Do-pyazah, not disposed

himself to enter the water, the emperor asked why he alone held aloof. The mollah, thus pressed, divested himself of his outer garments and plunged in.

He searched for a long time, but could not find a single egg. At length he emerged from the cistern, and, moving his arms in the manner of a cock flapping his wings, he cried aloud, "Cock-a-doodle-doo!"

"What," asked Akbar, "is the meaning of this?"

"Your Majesty," came the reply, "those who brought you the eggs were hens, but I am a cock, and you must not expect an egg from me."

At which Akbar laughed heartily, and had Do-pyazah well rewarded.

Chinese Wit and Humor

Confucius

Sayings from the Analects

While a man's father is alive, look at the bent of his will; when his father is dead, look at his conduct.

An accomplished scholar is not a cooking-pot.

When good order prevailed in his country, Ning Wu acted the part of a wise man; when his country was in disorder, he acted the part of a fool. Others may equal his wisdom, but they cannot equal his folly.

How can one know about death, when one does not understand life?

Four horses cannot overtake the tongue.

If you were not covetous, you could not even bribe a man to steal from you.

When their betters love the *Rules* [*of Propriety*], then the folk are easy tools.

Why use an ox-knife to kill a hen?

There are two classes that never change: the supremely wise and the profoundly stupid.

If a man is disliked at forty, he always will be.

When driving with a woman, hold the reins in one hand and keep the other behind your back.

Chwang Tze

Life, Death, and Immortality

Four men were conversing together, when the following resolution was suggested: "Whosoever can make inaction the head, life the backbone, and death the tail, of his existence, that man shall be admitted to friendship with us." The four looked at each other and smiled; and, tacitly accepting the conditions, they became friends forthwith.

After a time one of them fell ill, and another went to see him. "Verily, God is great!" said the invalid. "See how he has doubled me up. My back is so hunched that my bowels are at the top of my body; my shoulders are above my neck; my hair is growing up toward the sky. The whole economy of my physical organism is completely out of order. Nevertheless, my mental equilibrium is not disturbed." So saying, he dragged himself painfully to a well, where he could see himself, and exclaimed, "Alas! that God should have doubled me up like this!"

"Are you afraid?" asked his friend. "I am not," was the answer; "for what have I to fear? Ere long I shall be decomposed. My left shoulder will become a cock, and I shall herald the approach of morn; my right shoulder will become a crossbow, and I shall be able to get broiled duck; my posterior will become a pair of wheels, and, with my soul for a horse, I shall be able to ride in my own chariot. I am now working out my destiny on earth; I shall then be completing it in the inevitable. Content with the natural sequence of these states, joy and sorrow touch me not. I am

simply, as the ancients expressed it, hanging in the air, unable to cut myself down, bound with the trammels of material existence. But the material has always given way before the immaterial; therefore, why should I be afraid?"

Presently the third of the friends fell sick, and lay gasping for breath, while his family stood weeping about him. The fourth went to visit him. "Tush!" he cried to his wife and children, "begone! You interfere with his decomposition." Then, leaning against the door, he said, "Verily, God is great! I wonder what He will make of you now? Do you think He will turn you into a rat's liver [the Chinese believe a rat has no liver], or into the shoulders of a snake?"

To which came the reply, "Suppose that the boiling metal in a smelting-pot were to bubble up, and say, 'Make an Excalibur of me,' I think the caster would reject that metal as uncanny. And if a sinner like me were to say to God, 'Make a man of me,' I think He would reject me as uncanny. The universe is the smelting-pot, and God is the caster. I shall go whithersoever I am sent, to wake unconscious of the past, as a man wakes from a dreamless sleep."

—*"The Great Supreme."*

The Pleasure of Fishes—Anecdote

Chwang Tze and a friend had strolled on to a bridge over the Hao, when the former observed, "Look how the minnows are darting about! That is the pleasure of fishes."

"Not being a fish yourself," objected the friend, "how can you possibly know in what the pleasure of fishes consists?"

"And you not being I," retorted Chwang Tze, "how can you know that I do not know?"

To which the friend replied, "If I, not being you, cannot know what you know, it follows that you, not being a fish, cannot know in what the pleasure of fishes consists."

"Let us go back," rejoined Chwang Tze, "to your original question. You ask me how I know in what the pleasure of fishes consists. Well, I know that I am enjoying myself over the Hao, and from this I infer that the fishes are enjoying themselves in it."—*"Autumn Floods."*

Sung Yu

Popularity

The eagle is king of the birds; among fishes
  Leviathan holds the first place.
Cleaving the far, crimson clouds,
  The eagle soars upward apace,
With only the blue sky above,
  Into remote realms of space;
But the grandeur of heaven and earth
  Is naught to the hedge-sparrow race.
The whale through one ocean swims,
  To take its course through a second;
While the minnow measures a puddle
  As the width of the sea might be reckoned.
And just as with birds and fishes,
  Is the case, to be sure, with man.
Here soars a resplendent eagle,
  There swims huge leviathan:
Behold the philosopher sapient,
  Whose fame will never grow dim;
Alone in the might of his wisdom—
  Can the rabble understand him?

Li Po

Intoxication

WHAT is life, after all, but a dream,
And why should such pother be made?
Better far to be tipsy, I deem,
And doze all day long in the shade.

When I wake, and look out on the lawn,
I hear 'mid the flowers a bird sing;
I ask, "Is it evening, or dawn?"
The mango-bird whistles, "'Tis spring!"

O'erpower'd with the beautiful sight,
Another full goblet I pour,
And would sing till the moon rises bright—
But soon I'm as drunk as before.

Anonymous Author

Civility

YOU ask me why I greet the priest,
But not his god;
The god sits mute, the man at least
Returns my nod.

Yuan Mei

A Stanza for a Tobacco-Pouch

Dear Friend:

I have received your letter of congratulation, and am much obliged. At the end of the letter, however, you mention that you have a tobacco-pouch for me, which will be forwarded upon the receipt of a stanza. But such an exchange would seem to establish a curious precedent. If for a tobacco-pouch you expect in return a stanza, for a hat or a pair of boots you would demand a whole poem; while your brother might bestow a cloak or coat upon me, and believe himself entitled to an epic. At this rate, dear friend, your congratulations would become rather costly to me.

Let me instruct you, on the other hand, that a man once gave a thousand yards of silk for a phrase, and another man a beautiful girl for a stanza—which makes your tobacco-pouch look like a slight inducement, does it not?

Mencius forbids the taking advantage of people on the ground of one's rank or merits. How much worse, therefore, to do so by virtue of a mere tobacco-pouch! Elegant as a tobacco-pouch may be, it is only the work of a sempstress; but my poetry, poor as it may be, is the work of my brain. The exchange would evidently be complimentary to the sempstress, and the reverse to me.

Now, if you had taken needle and thread and made the pouch yourself—ah, then what a difference! Then, indeed, a dozen stanzas would not have been too great a return. But it would hardly be proper to ask a famous

warrior like yourself to lay down sword and shield for needle and thread. Nor, dear friend, am I likely to get the pouch at all, if you take offense at these little jokes of mine. What I advise you to do is, to bear with me patiently, send the tobacco-pouch, and wait for the stanza until it comes.

—*"Letters."*

Recipes

Birds' nests and water-slugs have no particular flavor of their own, and are therefore not worth eating.

The best cook cannot prepare artistically more than five or six different dishes in one day. A host of mine once had forty courses served at a meal, and as soon as I got home I called for a bowl of rice to still my hunger.

In order to enjoy the pleasures of the palate to the fullest degree, you must be sober. If you are drunk, you cannot tell one flavor from another.

The ingredients of a dish should always harmonize with one another—like two people in marriage.

Some cooks use the flesh of chickens and pigs for one soup, and as chickens and pigs have souls, they will hold those cooks to account, in the next world, for their treatment of them in this.

Bamboo-shoots ought never to be cut with a knife which has just been used on onions.

While cooking, do not allow ashes from your pipe, perspiration from your face, soot from the fuel, or beetles from the ceiling to drop into the saucepan: the guests would be likely to pass the dish by.—*"Cookery Book."*

Popular Novel

The Courtship of Two Shadows

It happened, about the middle of the summer, when the heat was very oppressive, that Chin Seng and his cousin, the young lady, both went to their summer-houses by the water at the same time, for the purpose of enjoying some cooler air. As there was scarcely a breath of wind, the surface of the water was unruffled, and the two pavilions were clearly reflected in it. While Yu Kwen was gazing into the water, she suddenly gave a start, exclaiming, "How does it come that my shadow appears on the opposite side, while I myself am on this? Surely that must be some bad omen." After a little consideration, however, she changed her opinion, for she discovered that the shadow must be the reflected figure of her cousin, who, being without his cap, looked just like a woman; and it was, in fact, from this circumstance that her mistake arose. She then examined it more attentively, and acknowledged that it was indeed the very image of herself, and that there was hardly any difference between them. Being thus compelled to give up her exclusive claim to beauty, she began to have a sort of sympathy toward what so nearly resembled herself, and by degrees to feel resentment against the parents who cruelly kept such close relatives apart.

Chin Seng, as he sat leaning against the rails, also caught sight of a shadow on the opposite side, and began to dance for very joy. Then he scrutinized the reflection attentively, and became conscious that, as people had said, he was not

to be compared with his cousin for good looks. His passion being greater than his discretion, he called out to the shadow, "Are you not Yu Kwen? I see you are my counterpart; why should we not meet, and be companions for life?" As he spoke, he stretched out his arms over the water, as if to lift out the object of his affections.

The young lady, who saw and heard his demonstrations, felt an increase of the regard she had already conceived for him, and would have liked to return the signals. But she was afraid of the consequences of discovery, and felt a natural diffidence, as she had never, either in speech or action, broken the rules of etiquette. She therefore merely conveyed the sentiments of her heart by a smile. The youth, who was exactly like his father, knew quite well that, in order to find out if a woman was favorably disposed toward you, you needed only to observe if she smiled. If her lips parted in a smile, it was a sufficiently good sign.

Thus was the love-knot tied between these two through the agency of their shadows. From that time forth they came regularly every day to the same place, to avoid the heat. Nor did they ever allow any of their attendants to escort them, but preferred sitting alone, so that they could lean over the rails and converse with each other's shadows in the water. On these occasions, however, Chin Seng did most of the conversing, the young lady using only the language of her hands to express her sentiments; for she was afraid that, should she speak, and her father or mother hear her, she might not only be exposed to severe chastisement, but even her life might be endangered.

—*"The Shadows in the Water."*

Proverbs

An avaricious man, who can never get enough, is like a snake trying to swallow an elephant.

To draw the picture of a tiger, and make a dog out of it, is to imitate a masterpiece and spoil it.

Human pleasures are like the flittings of sparrows.

A narrow-minded man resembles a frog in a well.

Do not pull up your stockings in a melon-patch, or straighten your hat in a peach orchard; any one seeing you may think you are stealing.

To talk much and arrive nowhere is the same as climbing a tree to catch a fish.

One thread does not make a rope.

The tiger does not walk with the hind.

You can neither buy wood in the forest nor fish by the lake.

If a blind man leads another blind man, they will both fall into a hole.

No maker of idols worships the gods; he knows their composition too well.

A man with a purple nose may be very temperate in drink, only no one will believe it.

Money makes the blind man see.

We admire our own writings, but other men's wives.

If you are afraid of being found out, leave it alone.

Bend your neck if the eaves are low.

It's not the wine that makes a man drunk; it's the man himself.

A whisper on earth sounds like thunder in heaven.

To get a favor granted is harder than to kill a tiger.
Sweep the snow from your own door.
If there were no error there could be no truth.
A needle never pricks with both ends.
Don't put two saddles on one horse.
Trust nature rather than a bad doctor.

Japanese Wit and Humor

Murasaki Shikib

A Homily on Women

Though Genji had become drowsy, and finally dozed off, the conversation went on about different persons and characters, and Samo-no-Kami proceeded:

"It is unquestionable that though at the first glance many women appear to be without defects, yet when we come to the actual selection of any one of them we should seriously hesitate in our choice.

"How varied are the characters and the dispositions of women! Some who are youthful and favored by nature strive almost selfishly to keep themselves with the utmost reserve. If they write, they write harmlessly and innocently; yet, at the same time, they are choice in their expressions, which have delicate touches of bewitching sentiment. This might possibly make us entertain a suddenly conceived fancy for them; yet they would give us but slight encouragement. They may allow us just to hear their voices, but when we approach them they will speak with subdued breath, and almost inaudibly. Beware, however, lest among these you chance to encounter some astute actress, who, under a surface that is smooth, conceals a current that is deep. This sort of lady, it is true, generally appears quite modest; but often proves, when we come closer, to be of a very different temperament from what we anticipated. Here is one drawback to be guarded against.

"Among characters differing from the above, some are too full of sentimental sweetness; whenever occasion offers them

romance they become spoiled. Such would be decidedly better if they had less sentiment and more sense.

"Others, again, are singularly earnest—too earnest, indeed—in the performance of their domestic duty; and such, with their hair pushed back for work, devote themselves like drudges to household affairs. Man, whose duties generally call him from home all the day, naturally hears and sees the social movements both of public and private life, and notices different things, both good and bad. Of such things he would not like to talk freely with strangers, but only with some one closely allied to him. Indeed, a man may have many things in his mind which cause him to smile or to grieve. Occasionally something of a political nature may irritate him beyond endurance. These matters he would like to talk over with his fair companion, that she may soothe him, and sympathize with him. But a woman as above described is often unable to understand him, or does not endeavor to do so; and this only makes him more miserable. At another time he may brood over his hopes and aspirations; but he has no hope of solace. She is not only incapable of sharing these with him, but might carelessly remark, 'What ails you?' How severely would this try the temper of a man!

"If, then, we clearly see all this, the only suggestion I can make is that the best thing to do is to choose one who is gentle and modest, and strive to guide and educate her according to the best ideal we may think of. This is the best plan; and why should we not do so? Our efforts would not be surely all in vain. But no; a girl whom we thus educate, and who proves to be competent to bear us company, often disappoints us when she is left alone. She may then show her incapability, and her occasional actions may be done in such an unbecoming manner that both good and bad are

equally displeasing. Are not all these against us men? Remember, however, that there are some who may not be very agreeable at ordinary times, yet who flash occasionally upon us with a potent and almost irresistible charm."

Thus Sama-no-Kami, though eloquent, not having come to any point whatever, remained thoughtful for some minutes, and then resumed:

"After all, as I have already observed, I can only make this suggestion: That we should not consider too much either birth or beauty, but select one who is gentle and tranquil, and consider her to be best suited for our last haven of rest. If, in addition, she is of good social position, and is blessed with sweetness of temper, we should be delighted with her, and not trouble ourselves to search or notice any trifling deficiency. And the more so as, if her conscience is clear and pure, calmness and serenity of features can naturally be looked for.

"There are women who are too diffident, and too reserved, and carry their forbearance so far as to pretend not to be aware even of such annoyances as afford them just grounds of complaint. A time arrives when their sorrows and anxieties become greater than they can endure. Even then, however, they will not resort to open speaking, and complain; but, instead thereof, they will fly away to some remote retreat among the mountain hamlets, or to some secluded spot by the seaside, leaving behind them some painful letter or despairing verses, and making themselves mere sad memories of the past. Often when a boy I heard such stories read by ladies, and the sad pathos of them even caused my tears to flow: but now I can only declare such deeds to be acts of mere folly. For what does it all amount to? Simply to this: That the woman, in spite of the pain which it causes her, and discarding a heart which may be still lingering toward her, takes

to flight, regardless of the feelings of others—of the anguish, and of the anxiety, which those who are dearest to her suffer with her. Nay, this act of folly may even be committed simply to test the sincerity of her lover's affection for her. . . .

"But there are also women who are too self-confident and obtrusive. These, if they discover some slight inconsistency in men, fiercely betray their indignation and behave with arrogance. A man may show a little inconsistency occasionally, but yet his affection may remain; then matters will in time become right again, and they will pass their lives happily together. If, therefore, the woman cannot show a tolerable amount of patience, this will but add to her unhappiness. She should, above all things, strive not to give way to excitement; and when she experiences any unpleasantness, she should speak of it frankly, but with moderation. And if there should be anything worse than unpleasantness, she should even then complain of it in such a way as not to irritate the men. If she guides her conduct on principles such as these, even her very words, her very demeanor, may in all probability increase his sympathy and consideration for her. One's self-denial and the restraint which one imposes upon oneself, often depend on the way in which another behaves to us. The woman who is too indifferent and too forgiving is also inconsiderate. Remember, *The unmoored boat floats about.* Is it not so?"

To-no-Chiujio quickly nodded assent, as he said, "Quite true! A woman who has no strength of emotion, no passion of sorrow or of joy, can never be holders of us. Nay, even jealousy, if not carried to the extent of undue suspicion, is not undesirable. If we ourselves are not in fault, and leave the matter alone, such jealousy may easily be kept within due

bounds. But surely," he added suddenly; " some women have to bear, and do bear, every grief that they may encounter with unmurmuring and suffering patience."

So said To-no-Chiujio, who implied by this allusion that his sister was a woman so circumstanced. But Genji was still dozing, and no remark came from his lips.

Sama-no-Kami had been recently made a doctor of literature, and, like a bird, was inflating his feathers; so To-no-Chiujio, willing to draw him out as much as possible, gave him every encouragement to proceed with his discourse. Again, therefore, he took up the conversation, and said:

" Call to your mind affairs in general, and judge of them. Is it not always true that reality and sincerity are to be preferred to merely artificial excellence? Artisans, for instance, make different sorts of articles, as their talents serve them. Some of them are keen and expert, and cleverly manufacture objects of temporary fashion, which have no fixed or traditional style, and which are only intended to strike the momentary fancy. These, however, are not the true artisans. The real excellence of the true artisan is tested by those who make, without defects or sensational peculiarities, articles to decorate, we will say, some particular building, in conformity with correct taste and high esthetic principles. Look, for instance, at the eminence which has been attained by several of the artists of the Imperial College of Painting. . . .

" Such is the nature of the case in painting, in penmanship, and in the arts generally. How much more, then, are those women undeserving of our admiration, who, though they are rich in outward and in fashionable display, attempting to dazzle our eyes, are yet lacking in the solid foundations of reality, fidelity, and truth! Do not, my friends, consider

me going too far, but let me proceed to illustrate these observations by my own experience."

So saying, Sama-no-Kami advanced his seat, and Genji awoke. To-no-Chiujio was quite interested in the conversation, and was keeping his eye upon the speaker, leaning his cheek upon his hand.

This long discourse of Sama-no-Kami reminds us of the preacher's sermon, and amuses us. And it seems that, on occasions like these, one may easily be carried away by circumstances, until one is willing to communicate even one's own private affairs.—"*Genji Monogatari.*"

Popular Farce

Abstraction

CHARACTERS:

A HUSBAND.
HIS WIFE.
TARAUKUWAZHIYA, their Servant.

Room in a Private House.

HUSBAND, *alone.*

Husband. I am a resident in the suburbs of the metropolis. On the occasion of a recent journey East I was served at a tea-house in the post-town of Nogami, in the province of Mino, by a girl called Hana, who, having since then heard of my return to the capital, has followed me up here, and settled down at Kita-Shirakaha, where she expects me this evening according to a promise made by letter. But my vixen of a wife has got scent of the affair, and thus made it difficult for me to go. So what I mean to do is to call her, and tell her some pretty fable that may set me free.—Hullo! Hullo! Are you there, pray? Are you there?

Wife (*outside*). So it seems you are pleased to call me. What may it be that makes you thus call me?

Husband. Well, please to come in.

Enter WIFE.

Wife. Your commands are obeyed.

Husband. My reason for calling you is simply this: I want to tell you how much my spirits have been affected by

continual dreams that I have had. That is why I have called you.

Wife. You are talking rubbish. Dreams proceed from organic disturbance, and do not come true; so pray don't trouble your head about them.

Husband. What you say is quite correct. Dreams, proceeding as they do from organic disturbance, do not come true nine times out of ten. Still, mine have affected my spirits to such an extent that I am thinking of some pilgrimage or other to offer up prayers both on your behalf and on my own.

Wife. Then where shall you go?

Husband. I mean—to say nothing of those in the metropolis and in the suburbs—to worship at all Shinto shrines and all Buddhist temples throughout the land.

Wife. No, no! I won't allow you to go out of the house for a single hour. If you are so completely bent upon it, choose some devotion that can be performed at home.

Husband. Some devotion to be performed at home? What devotion could it be?

Wife. Burning incense on your arm or on your head.

Husband. How thoughtlessly you do talk! What! is a devotion like that to suit *me*—a layman, if ever there was one?

Wife. I won't tolerate any devotion that cannot be performed at home.

Husband. Well, I never! You *are* one for talking at random. Hang it! what devotion shall it be? (*Reflects a few moments.*) Ah, I have it! I will perform the devotion of abstraction.

Wife. Abstraction? What is that?

Husband. Your want of familiarity with the term is but natural. It is a devotion that was practised in days of old

by Saint Daruma—blessings on him! You put your head under what is called the "abstraction blanket," and obtain salvation by forgetting all things past and to come—a most difficult form of devotion.

Wife. About how long does it take?

Husband. Well, I should say about a week or two.

Wife. That won't do, either, if it is to last so many days.

Husband. Then for how long would my darling consent to it without complaining?

Wife. About one hour is what I should suggest; but, however, if you can do it in a day, you are welcome to try.

Husband. Never, never! This important devotion is not a thing to be so easily performed within the limits of a single day. Please, won't you grant me leave for at least a day and a night?

Wife. A day and a night?

Husband. Yes.

Wife. I don't much relish the idea; but if you are so completely bent upon it, take a day and a night for your devotion.

Husband. Do you really mean it?

Wife. Yes, really.

Husband. Oh, that is indeed too delightful! But I have something to tell you. Know, then, that if a woman so much as peep through a chink, to say nothing of her coming into the actual room where the devotee is sitting, the spell of the devotion is instantly broken. So be sure not to come where I am.

Wife. All right. I will not come to you. So perform away.

Husband. Well, then, we will meet again after it shall have been happily accomplished.

Wife. I shall have the pleasure of seeing you when it is over.

Husband and *Wife.* Good-by! Good-by!

(*She moves away.*)

Husband. Wait a moment!

Wife. What is it?

Husband. As I mentioned before, mind you don't come to me. We have the Buddhist's warning words, "When there is a fuss in the kitchen, to be rapt in abstraction is an impossibility." So, whatever you do, do not come to me.

Wife. Please feel no uneasiness. I shall not think of intruding.

Husband. Well, then, we shall meet again when the devotion is over.

Wife. When it is done, I shall have the pleasure of seeing you.

Husband and *Wife.* Good-by! Good-by! (*Exit* WIFE.)

Husband. What fools women are, to be sure! To think of the delight of her taking it all for truth, when I tell her that I am going to perform the religious devotion of abstraction for one whole day and night!—Taraukuwazhiya, are you there? Hullo!

Servant (*without*). Yes, sir!

Husband. Are you there?

Enter SERVANT.

Servant. At your service.

Husband. Oh, you have been quick in coming.

Servant. You seem to be in good spirits, master.

Husband. For my good spirits there is a good reason. I have made, as you know, an engagement to go and visit Hana this evening. But as my old woman has got scent of

the affair, thus making it difficult for me to go, I have told her that I mean to perform the religious devotion of abstraction for a whole day and night—a very good device, is it not, for carrying out my plan of going to see Hana?

Servant. A very good device indeed, sir.

Husband. But in connection with it, I want to ask you to do me a good turn. Will you?

Servant. Pray, what may it be?

Husband. Why, simply this: It is, that I have told my old woman not to intrude on my devotions; but, being the vixen that she is, who knows but what she may not peep and look in? In which case she would make a fine noise, if there were no semblance of a religious practise to be seen; and so, though it is giving you a great deal of trouble, I wish you would oblige me by taking my place until my return.

Servant. Oh, it would be no trouble; but I shall get such a scolding if I am found out, that I would rather ask you to excuse me.

Husband. What nonsense you talk! Do oblige me by taking my place; for I will not allow her to scold you.

Servant. Oh, sir, that is all very well; but pray excuse me for this time.

Husband. No, no! you must please do this for me; for I will not so much as let her point a finger at you.

Servant. Please, please let me off!

Husband. Gracious goodness! The fellow heeds what my wife says, and won't heed what I say myself! Do you mean that you have made up your mind to brave me?

(*Threatening to beat him.*)

Servant. Oh, I will obey!

Husband. No, no; you mean to brave me!

Servant. Oh, no, sir! surely I have no choice but to obey.

Husband. Will you really?

Servant. Yes, really.

Husband. My anger was only a feint. Well, then, take my place, please.

Servant. Yes, to be sure; if it is your desire, I will do so.

Husband. That is really too delightful! Just stop quiet while I set things to rights for you to sit in abstraction.

Servant. Your commands are laid to heart.

Husband. Sit down here.

Servant. Oh, what an unexpected honor!

Husband. Now, then; I fear it will be uncomfortable, but oblige me by putting your head under this "abstraction blanket."

Servant. Your commands are laid to heart.

Husband. Well, it is scarcely necessary to say so; but even if my old woman should tell you to take off the abstraction blanket, be sure not to do so until my return.

Servant. Of course not. I should not think of taking it off. Pray don't be alarmed.

Husband. I will be back soon.

Servant. Please be good enough to return quickly.

Husband. Ah, that is well over! No doubt Hana is waiting impatiently for me. I will make haste and go. (*Exit.*)

Enter WIFE.

Wife. I am mistress of this house. I perfectly understood my partner the first time he asked me not to come to him on account of the religious devotion which he was going to perform. But there is something suspicious in his insisting on it a second time with a "Don't come to look at me! Don't come to look at me!" So I will just peep through some hidden corner, and see what the thing looks like.

(*Peeping.*) What's this? Why, it seems much more uncomfortable than I had supposed! Please, please; you told me not to come to you, and therefore I had intended not to do so; but I felt anxious, and so I have come. Won't you lift off that "abstraction blanket," and take something, if only a cup of tea, to rest your mind a little? (*The figure under the blanket shakes its head.*) You are quite right. The thought of my being so disobedient, and coming to you after the care you took to tell me not to intrude, may justly rouse your anger; but please forgive my rudeness, and do please take that blanket off, and repose yourself, do! (*The figure shakes its head again.*) You may say no again and again, but I *will* have it off! You *must* take it off! Do you hear? (*She pulls it off, and the* SERVANT *stands exposed.*) What! you, you rascal? Where has my old man gone? Speak, why don't you?

Servant. Oh, I know nothing about it!

Wife. Oh, how furious I am! Oh, how furious I am! Of course he must have gone to that woman's house. Why don't you speak? Why don't you speak? I shall tear you in pieces!

Servant. In that case, how can I keep anything from you? Master has walked out to see Miss Hana.

Wife. What! *Miss* Hana, do you say? Say *Minx*—say *Minx!* Gracious me, what a rage I am in! Then he really has gone to Hana's house, has he?

Servant. Yes, he really has gone there.

Wife. Oh, when I hear he has gone to Hana's house, I feel all ablaze, and oh, in such a passion! Oh, I'm in such a passion! (*Bursts out crying.*)

Servant. Your tears are only natural.

Wife. Ah, I had meant not to let you go if you had kept it

from me. But as you have told the truth, I forgive you. So get up.

Servant. I am extremely grateful for your kindness.

Wife. Now tell me, how came you to be sitting there?

Servant. It was master's order that I should take his place; and so, although it was most repugnant to me, there was no alternative but for me to sit down, and I did so.

Wife. Naturally. Now I want to ask you to do me a good turn. Will you?

Servant. Pray, what may it be?

Wife. Why, just simply this: You will arrange the blanket on top of me, just as it was arranged on top of you. Won't you?

Servant. Oh, your commands ought, of course, to be laid to heart; but I shall get such a scolding if the thing becomes known, that I would rather ask you to excuse me.

Wife. No, no. I will not allow him to scold you. So you must really please arrange me.

Servant. Please, please, let me off this time!

Wife. No, no. You must arrange me, as I will not so much as let him point a finger at you.

Servant. Well, then, if it comes to my getting a scolding, I count on you as an intercessor.

Wife. Of course; I will intercede for you. So do you please arrange me.

Servant. In that case, be so good as to sit down here.

Wife. All right.

Servant. I fear it will be uncomfortable, but I must ask you to put your head under this.

Wife. Please arrange me so that he cannot possibly know the difference between us.

Servant. He will never know. It will do very nicely like

Wife. Will it?

Servant. Yes.

Wife. Well, then, do you go and rest.

Servant. Your commands are laid to heart.

(*Moves away.*)

Wife. Wait a moment, Taraukuwazhiya!

Servant. Yes, ma'am.

Wife. It is scarcely necessary to say so, but be sure not to tell him that it is I.

Servant. Of course not. I should not think of telling him.

Wife. It has come to my ears that you have been secretly wishing for a purse and silk wrapper. I will give you one of each, which I have worked myself.

Servant. I am extremely grateful for your kindness.

Wife. Now be off and rest.

Servant. Yes, ma'am. (*Exit.*)

Enter HUSBAND, *singing.*

"Why should the lonely sleeper heed
The midnight bell, the bird of dawn?
But ah, they're sorrowful indeed
When loosen'd was the damask zone!
Her image still, with locks that sleep
Had tangled, haunts me, and for aye;
Like willow-sprays where winds do sweep,
All tangled, too, my feelings lie."

As the world goes, this rarely happens even with the most ardent secret love; but in my case I never see her but what I care for her more and more.

"'Twas in the spring-time that we first did meet,
Nor e'er can I forget my flow'ret sweet."

Ah, well—ah, well! I keep talking like one in a dream, and meantime Taraukuwazhiya is impatiently awaiting me. I wonder how he has been keeping my place for me. I feel a bit uneasy.—Hullo! Hullo! Taraukuwazhiya! I'm back! I'm back! I'm just back! Poor fellow, the time must have seemed long to you! Well, I should like to tell you to take off the "abstraction blanket"; but you would probably feel ashamed at being exposed. Anyhow, I will relate to you what Hana said last night, if you care to listen. Do you? (*The figure nods acquiescence.*) So you would like to? Well, then, I'll tell you all about it. I made all the haste I could, but it was nearly dark before I arrived; and I was just going to ask admittance, my thoughts full of how anxiously Hana must be waiting for me in her loneliness, saying, perhaps, with the Chinese poet:

"He promised, but he comes not, and I lie on my pillow in the fifth watch of the night;
The wind shakes the pine-trees and the bamboos: can it be my beloved?"

when there came borne to me the sound of her voice, humming as she sat alone:

"The breezes through the pine-trees moan,
The dying torch burns low;
Ah me, 'tis eery all alone!
Say, will he come, or no?"

So I gave a gentle rap on the back door, on hearing which she cried out, "Who's there? Who's there?" Well,

a shower was falling at the time; so I answered by singing:

"Who comes to see you, Hana, dear,
Regardless of the soaking rain?
And do your words, 'Who's there? Who's there?'
Mean that you wait for lovers twain?"

To which Hana replied:

"What a fine joke! Well, who can tell?
On such a dark and rainy night,
Who ventures out must love me well,
And I, of course, must be polite,
And say, 'Pray, sir, pass this way.'"

And, with these words, she loosened the ring and staple with a cling-a-ring, and pushed open the door with a crick-a-tick; and while the breeze from the bamboo blind poured toward me laden with the scent of flowers, out she comes to me, and, "At your service, sir," says she, "though I am but a poor country maid." So in we went, hand in hand, to the parlor. But yet her first question, "Who's there?" had left me so doubtful as to whether she might not be playing a double game, that I turned my back on her, and said crossly that I supposed she had been expecting a number of lovers, and that the thought quite spoiled my pleasure. But, oh, what a darling Hana is! Coming to my side, and clasping my hand tight, she whispered, saying:

"If I do please you not, then from the first
Better have said that I do please you not;
But wherefore pledge your troth, and after turn
Against me? Alas! alas!"

Then she asked why I had not brought you, Taraukuwazhiya, with me; and on my giving the reason why you had remained at home, "Poor fellow," said she, "how lonely he must be all by himself! Never was there a handier lad at everything than he, though doubtless it is a case of the mugwort planted among the hemp, which grows straight without need of twisting, and of the sand mixed with the mud, which gets black without need of dyeing, and it is his having been bound to you from a boy that has made him so genteel and clever. Please always be a kind master to him." Yes, those are the things you have said of you when Hana is the speaker. As for my old vixen, she wouldn't let as much drop from her jaw in the course of a century, I'll warrant! (*Violent shaking of the blanket.*) Then she asked me to pass into the inner room to rest awhile. So in we went to the inner room, hand in hand. And then she brought out wine and food, and pressed me to drink, so that what with drinking oneself, and passing the cup to her, and pressing each other to drink, we kept feasting until quite far into the night, when at her suggestion we sought another room, and took a little repose. But soon day began to break, and I said I would go home. Then Hana exclaimed:

"Methought that when I met thee, dearest heart,
I'd tell thee all that swells within my breast!
But now already 'tis the hour to part,
And oh, how much still lingers unexpress'd!"

She wanted me to stay a little longer! "No!" said I, "I must get home. All the temple-bells are ringing." "And heartless priests they are," cried she, "that ring them! Horrid wretches to begin their ding-dong, ding-dong, ding-dong, when it is still the middle of the night!" But for all

her entreaties, and for all my own regrets, I remembered that "meeting is but parting," and,

> "Tearing me loose, I made to go. Farewell!
> Farewell a thousand times, like ocean sands
> Untold! And follow'd by her distant gaze,
> I went; but as I turn'd me round, the moon,
> A slender rim, sparkling remain'd behind,
> And oh, what pain it was to me to part!"

(*He sheds tears.*) And so I came home. Oh, isn't it a pity? (*Weeping again.*) Ah, well! out of my heart's joy has flamed all this long history, and meanwhile you must be very uncomfortable. Take off that "abstraction blanket." Take it off, for I have nothing more to tell you. Gracious goodness, how clumsy you are! Well, then, I must pull it off myself! I *will* have it off, man! Do you hear me?

(*He pulls off the blanket, and up jumps his* WIFE.)

Wife. Oh, how furious I am! Oh, how furious I am! To hoax me, and go off to Hana in that manner!

Husband. Oh, not at all—not at all! I never went to Hana. I have been performing my devotions; indeed I have.

Wife. What! So he means to come and tell me that he has been performing his devotions? And then into the bargain to talk about "things the old vixen would never have let drop"! Oh, I'm all ablaze with rage! Hoaxing me and going off—where? Going off—where?

(*Pursuing* HUSBAND *round the stage.*)

Husband. Not at all! not at all! I never said anything of the kind. Do, do forgive me! Do forgive me!

Wife. Oh, how furious I am! Oh, how furious I am! Where have you been, sir? Where have you been?

Husband. Well, then, why should I conceal it from you? I have been to pray both for your welfare and for my own at the Temple of the Five Hundred Disciples in Tsukushi.

Wife. Oh, how furious I am! Oh, how furious I am! As if you could have got as far as the Five Hundred Disciples!

Husband. Do, do forgive me! Do forgive me!

Wife. Oh, how furious I am! Oh, how furious I am! (HUSBAND *runs away.*) Where's the unprincipled wretch off to? Is there nobody there? Please catch him! I won't let him escape! I won't let him escape!

Kiokutei Bakin

On Clothes and Comforts

However much money you have, you will not keep it long; it will leave you, just like a traveler who has stayed overnight at an inn. The only substantial things in life are food and drink. Any little house you can just crawl into is large enough. The only difference between an emperor's palace and a straw hut is in their size and their situation, one being in town and the other in the country. A single room, with a mat long enough for you to stretch out your whole body, is quite sufficient lodging. As for the clothes which you dress your carcass in, the richest brocades and the commonest sackcloth differ only in being clean or dirty. After you are dead, no one can tell, from looking at your naked body, what sort of clothes you wore while alive. If these facts were to become recognized, our clothes would be patched with any sort of material or color. Now, however, a man will buy new, expensive garments which he does not really want, owe the money for them, strut about in these *borrowed* plumes, and finally pawn them.

—*"The Land of Dreams."*

Korean Wit and Humor

Legendary Tale

The Rabbit's Eye

It once happened that the king of the fishes got a sad wound in his nose through contact with a steel hook artfully covered by the body of a worm. His Majesty's physicians being unable to heal the wound, the councilors of the kingdom were called together for the purpose of debating on the subject. They talked a great deal for a long time without any of them reaching a single conclusion, or even making a single proposal, until at last the turtle, who had been thinking while the others were talking, addressed the council:

"In my belief, there is only one cure for his Majesty's lacerated nose: it is a poultice made from the eye of a living rabbit."

Here the turtle was interrupted by a general clamor, the purport of which was, that before you could get the eye you must first catch the rabbit, and that there were no rabbits under the water.

"Quite true," answered the turtle; "but I know of one who lives on land, in a field near the shore." And as it would have been difficult for any one without legs to walk even a short distance on land, the turtle was asked whether he would not himself go up and interview the rabbit. To this he consented, and forthwith paddled to the surface.

Sure enough, he found the rabbit where he expected to find him, sitting in clover. At once the turtle spoke to him in flattering terms, praising the length of his ears, and so forth, finally inviting him to come down and visit him in the sea.

The rabbit was much pleased at such civility, and felt a great inclination to see the royal palace, whose splendors the turtle described in eloquent language. But he recognized a serious objection, which he stated thus:

"I am very much obliged to you, but I don't know how to swim; besides, I am not sure whether the air would agree with me down under the water."

"Oh," replied the insinuating hard-shell, "you need have no fears as to that. It is ever so much fresher and cooler down where we live than in this hot, stuffy field. All you have to do is to put your front paws on my back, and I will take you safely below without any exertion on your part."

Accordingly, the deluded rabbit followed the instructions of the turtle, and soon found himself in the royal water-palace, where the council was awaiting his arrival. The rabbit was ushered to a seat of honor, surrounded by a guard, and then informed with what object he had been brought thither.

But though the rabbit had been deceived, he was as quick with his mind as with his legs, and promptly made up an excuse:

"I have," said he, "two pairs of eyes—my own, and one of glass. The glass pair I always use for traveling, to save the others from the dust. I am wearing my glass eyes at present, and they would, of course, be no use to his Majesty. However, if the turtle will take me back he is welcome to one of the others, which I buried in the ground before coming away."

This offer was greeted with unanimous assent, and the turtle was ordered to carry the rabbit ashore, the fishes apologizing to their obliging visitor for giving him so much

trouble. "Not at all! Don't mention it!" said the polite bunny, as he once more climbed on the turtle's back. And off they went.

The moment they touched the land, the rabbit hopped down, and said to the turtle, while he shook the water out of his ears:

"My friend, I will now leave you to dig for the other pair. The only eyes I ever had are at present in my head, and as I prefer to keep them, I wish you a very pleasant morning!"

Upon which the rabbit scampered away as fast as his four paws would carry him.

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